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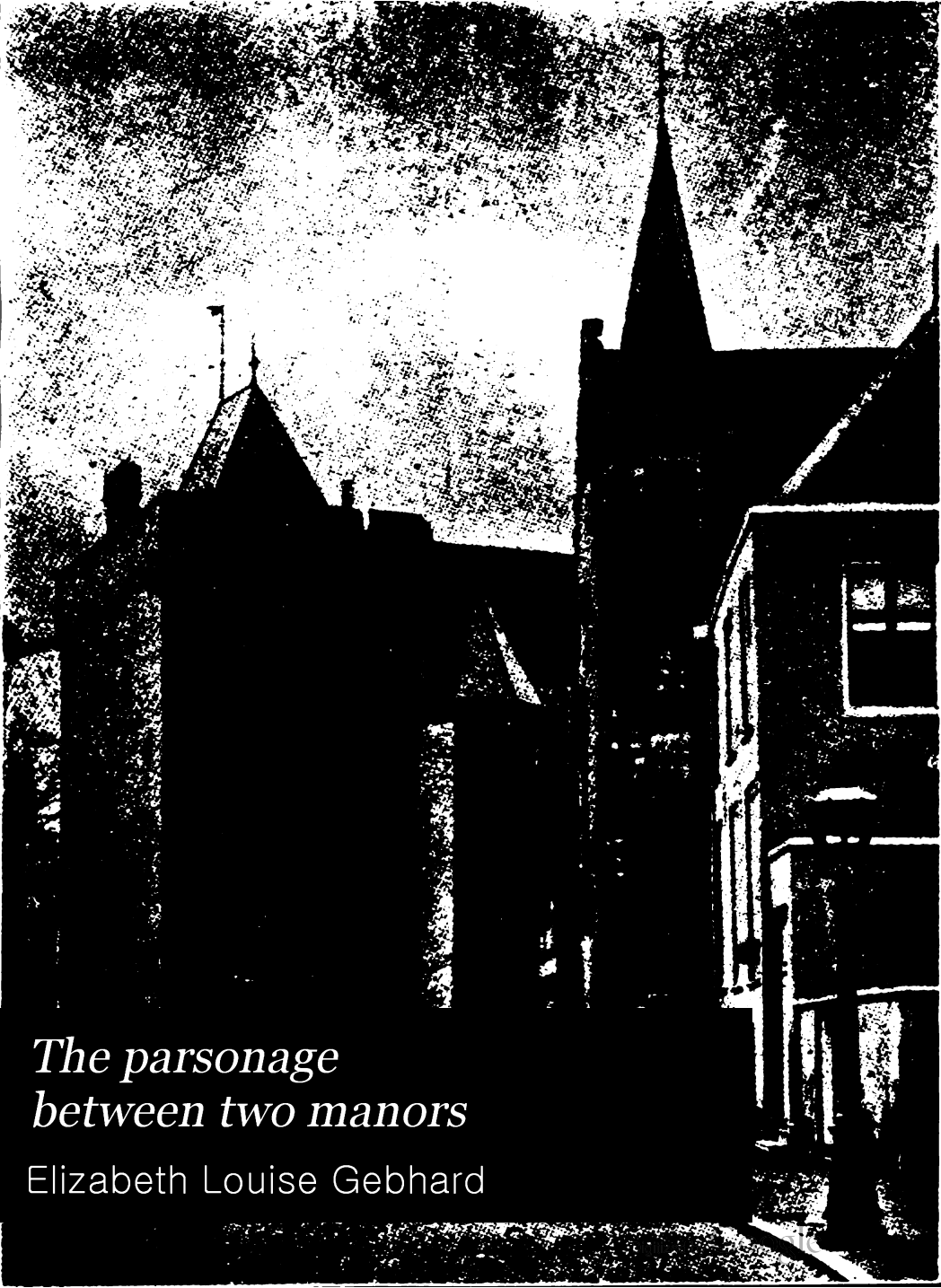
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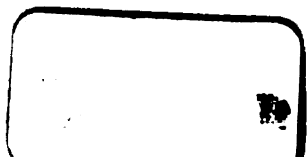
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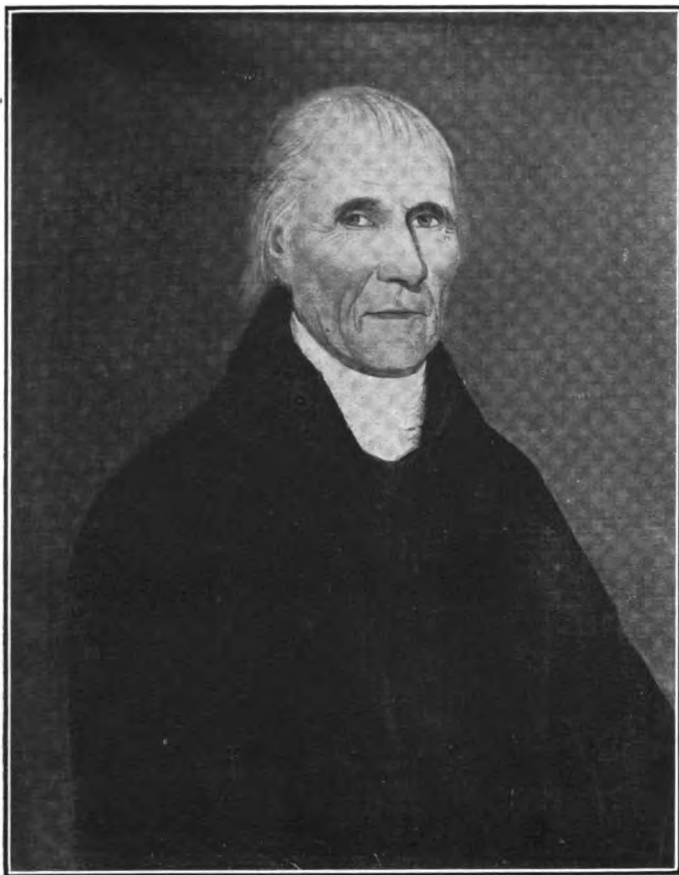
*The parsonage
between two manors*

Elizabeth Louise Gebhard

7422



**THE PARSONAGE
BETWEEN TWO MANORS**



REV. JOHN GABRIEL GEBHARD, V. D. M.

"Delineavit A. Phillips 1820."

From an Oil Painting now owned by Rev. John G. Gebhard, D. D.

THE PARSONAGE
BETWEEN
TWO MANORS

ANNALS OF CLOVER-KING

BY

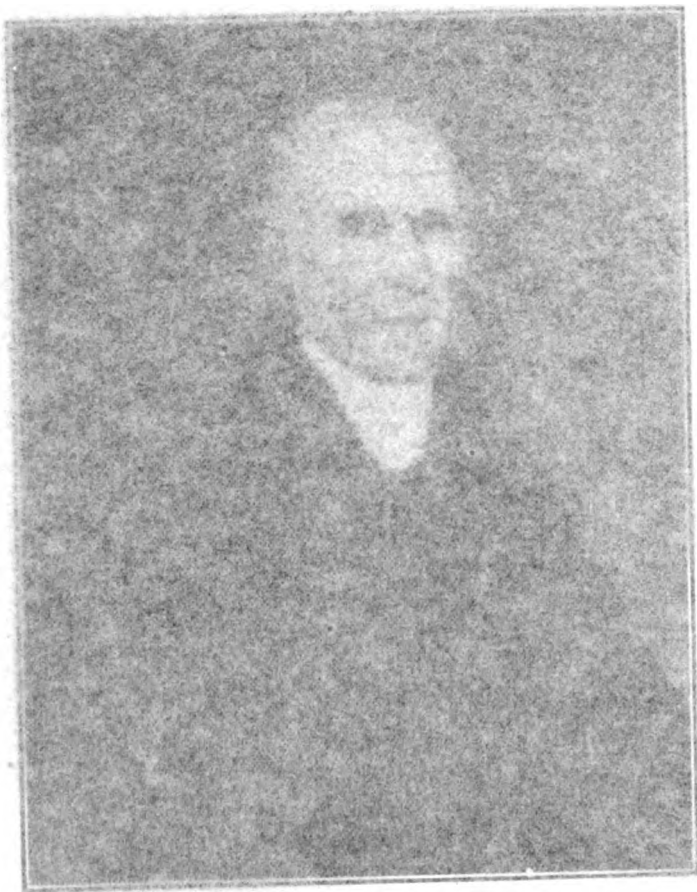
ELIZABETH L. GEBBARD

SECOND EDITION

BRYAN PRINTING COMPANY

HUDSON, N. Y.

1910



REV. GABRIEL GEBHARD, V. D. M.
Portrait by A. Phelps, 1857.
Now owned by Rev. John G. ...

D

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ANNALS OF CLOVER-REACH

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BY

ELIZABETH L. GEBHARD

TO MY FATHER
CHARLES WILLIAM GEBHARD, M. D.
WHOSE TALES OF OLD CLAVERACK
WERE THE BEST BELOVED STORIES
OF MY CHILDHOOD

FOREWORD

It is unusual for one clergyman to serve a congregation for fifty years, but it is still more exceptional that those fifty years should have begun contemporaneously with the birth of a nation, and continued over the first half century of its founding and growth.

The position of the church which the Rev. John Gabriel Gebhard served was unique, it being within the bounds of one Manor and almost on the border of a second. The Manor life for a hundred years or more before the Revolution, and for many years afterward, possessed features, political and social, which give it special interest. The Lower Van Rensselaer Manor at Claverack, and the original Livingston Manor on its southern boundary, have had few chroniclers outside of magazine articles treating of individual homes or persons. It has been said that we are a generation too late for the Manor stories, but hidden in by-ways, treasured by lovers of the past, to be read between the lines of sober facts and records, are still

FOREWORD

golden threads of incident and romance, and the aim of the compiler and writer of this volume has been to gather together these tales of a by-gone day, before they have slipped away forever.

A net-work of accurate historical fact lies under this story of fifty years of parsonage and Manor life. Beyond that are the stories passed down through pictures and letters and family possessions, which being dumb yet speak a language of their own; and more than all, the stories told at the fire-side, and in the twilight, and along the country roads, of the men and women and children of the long ago, who were our next of kin, and whose lives bear a special interest for their descendants.

There is still one more point which makes the Claverack Church and parsonage life important in itself. Though the parish of the Claverack Church covered miles of territory, and though the Church exerted an influence over a wide sweep of country, and was the mother of many churches, its early history is only recorded in its own parchment-bound books of record, for through almost a hundred years of its existence it was an independent organization.

FOREWORD

It is the hope of the author, that these stories of parsonage and Manors, the sweet and uplifting memories of the past, may be like a cluster of clover-blossoms from the old homes of Clover-reach, to the men and women of to-day whose ancestors called Claverack home.

The information contained in this volume has been gathered from many sources, that relating to the Gebhard family coming through the inheritance of letters and pictures, books and valuable papers, by various descendants of Dr. Gebhard. Thanks are due to Mr. M. D. Raymond for data pertaining to the records of the Collegiate Dutch Reformed Church of New York, and the unpublished correspondence of George Washington; also to Rev. Herman Hageman, Mrs. Anna Van Rensselaer Barnard, Mrs. Caroline Van Rensselaer Hall, Mr. Stephen Van Cortlandt Van Rensselaer, Mrs. Harold Wilson, Mr. R. Fulton Ludlow, Mrs. Arthur T. Sutcliffe, Mrs. Edward Hoffman Lynes, and Miss Georgina Schuyler, through whose generous co-operation, records and stories of the Van Rensselaers, Livingstons, Fultons, and various Claverack families have been obtained.

FOREWORD

The books I have consulted are: Histories of Columbia, Greene, and Dutchess Counties; Historical Sketches of Hudson, Documents relating to the Colonial History of New York, Ecclesiastical Records of the State of New York, Albany Chronicles, Magazine of American History, Spark's Life of Gouverneur Morris, Bacon's Hudson River from Ocean to Source, Theodore Roosevelt's New York, Memoir of Rev Richard Sluyter, Life of Washington Irving, Higginson's History of the United States, Manual of the Reformed Church in America, Claverack Old and New, by F. H. Webb; the Claverack Centennial, Documentary History of New York, Annals of the Van Rensselaers, Clarkson's Clermont or Livingston Manor, Church Records of Claverack, Livingston Manor, and the German Reformed Church of New York; Catalogue of Washington Seminary, The Posthumous Works of Ann Eliza Bleecker, Some Colonial Homesteads, Catherine Schuyler, by Mary Gay Humphreys, the Goede Vrouw of Mana-ha-ta, Mrs. Ellet's Women of the Revolution, Sketches of Catskill, and The Early History of Saugerties.

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The Parsonage Between Two Manors.

CHAPTER I.

FROM WALDORF TO ESOPUS.

In one of the colonial houses of Esopus, sat a young clergyman in his middle twenties, with his face bowed in his hands in deep thought. The question before him was a momentous one. Five years before he had left his native home in Waldorf, Germany, and started as many of the young men in that day did, for the new land of opportunity across the sea.

It was the eventful year of 1776, and Esopus (Kingston) was full of refugees from New York, which city being invested by the British, many of her residents had fled to the smaller towns and villages further up the Hudson, that they might at least find safety for their families in the dangers which threatened. In the

THE PARSONAGE BETWEEN TWO MANORS.

fatherland young John Gabriel Gebhard had been trained for his life work in the best educational institutions of the day. He had received his earlier university education at Heidelberg, and after a further course of theological study at Utrecht, had been licensed to preach by the Reformed Church of Holland. A son of a minister of the Gospel, it would seem that he brought with him to America special fitness for his calling, and a promise of good things to come. In the five years that he had been on American shores, this was the second time he had been called to change his home, and this time he had a wife still under twenty, and two small children to consider.

The young clergyman, after his month-long voyage from Germany, during which storms had swept the little vessel into the hollows of the sea and upon the crests of the billows, washed her decks, and even found the freight and luggage stored away in cabins and holds of the ship, at last landed, it is believed, at Philadelphia. For three years he had served the two congregations of Whitpain and Worcester, among the German portion of the population of Montgomery county, Pennsylvania. Here in the first year of his

FROM WALDORF TO ESOPUS.

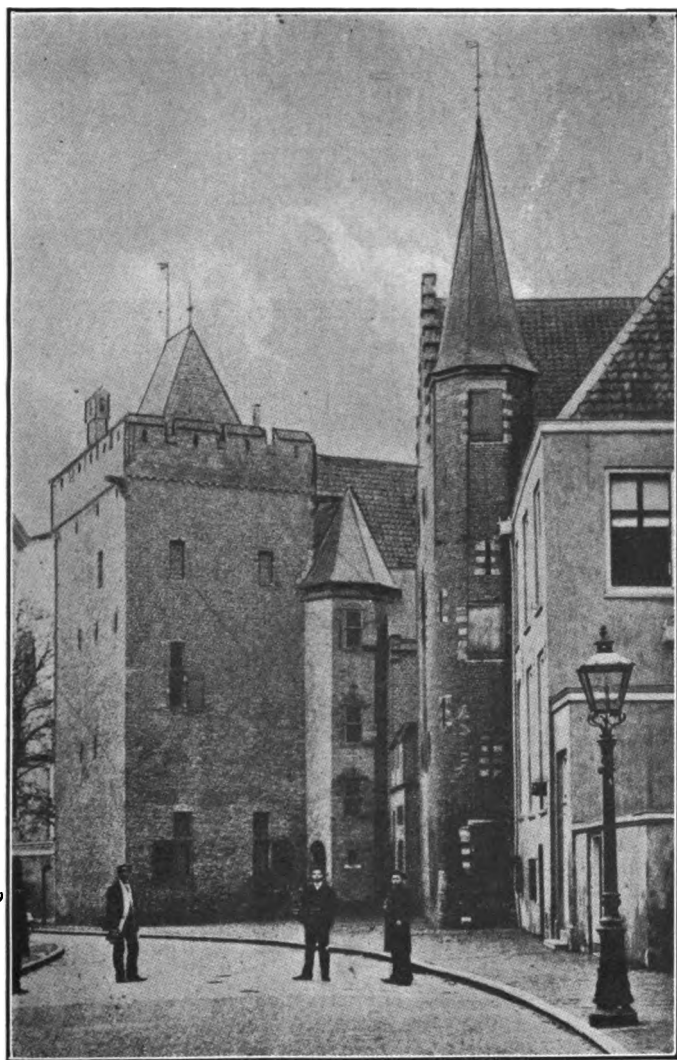
pastorate, he met and loved Anna Maria Magdalene Carver, a descendant of some of the early settlers of Philadelphia. She was a charming girl of fifteen, and the customs of the time tending toward early maturity, in June of the following year they were married. Succeeding years proved the choice of the girl wife to have been one of the wisest steps of the young man's life.

They had been married only a year when a call came to Mr. Gebhard to become the pastor of the German Reformed Church of New York. This church had been formed a few years earlier from a small body of the German-speaking members of the Collegiate Reformed Dutch Church in Nassau St., who wished to hear the Gospel preached in the High-Dutch tongue with which they were familiar. In this desire they had the full consent of the mother church. Indeed she ever gave her offspring a fostering care, the pastors of the German Church meeting in consistorial and classical gatherings with the ministers of the Collegiate Church, and being installed by the ministers of the older organization; while the members who had gone out to form the new church, also showed their attachment for

THE PARSONAGE BETWEEN TWO MANORS.

their previous place of worship, by requesting the privilege of returning to the old fold in case their enterprise should fail, and to be allowed to bury their dead with the Collegiate Church as formerly.

The call to the New York church had been accepted, and the young couple had taken up their abode in the city, the German Church being situated at that time in Nassau St. between John St. and Maiden Lane. Here two boys, Jacob and Philip, came to bless the minister's home, and the two years of his pastorate were full of activity in the growing town and congregation, and rich in friendships with men who like himself had left their old home and friends, to make a new home and life on American shores. Rev. Frederick Muhlenberg was at this time in charge of the only German Lutheran Church in the city, and the two young clergymen were fast friends. Later Mr. Gebhard named a third son for the friend from whom he was parted when New York became no longer a safe place of residence for either of them, for both were patriotic and devoted already to this new country for which they had dared so much. Neither of them was bound by ties of kindred to the British, who claimed the right of taxing



THE UNIVERSITY OF UTRECHT

A corner which has remained unchanged since Dr. Gebhard, and Dr. Livingston were students of the University.

FROM WALDORF TO ESOPUS.

the American people, so their loyalty to the Colonies knew no hindrance, and their words were frank and warmly patriotic, their strictures on English interference bearing no uncertain sound, and it came to pass that the English felt that these young German patriots would better magnify their calling in some other town than one invested by the British, and they were fortunate that they made their escape in safety. Frederick Muhlenberg retired from the ministry a few years later, and returning to Philadelphia, became a member of the Continental Congress of 1779.

The roads about New York looked at this time like a perpetual moving day, for the active patriots among the townspeople left the city, many of them having already suffered from the confiscation of much of their property, through the hands of the Tory soldiers who plundered on every side. Every horse and cart, sloop and sailing vessel, which could be procured was pressed into service, many of them carrying women and children, as well as furniture, out of the city whose churches were soon to be used as riding academies and prisons by the British, and whose congregations were already scattered. It was estimated that one third of

THE PARSONAGE BETWEEN TWO MANORS.

the residents of New York left the city at this time.

It was thus that the Rev. John Gabriel Gebhard had come to Esopus. After a short time it became known where the popular young German minister from New York was to be found, and since the supply of clergymen was not great in the new country, even though outside of the cities they usually served three or four congregations, the New York minister received at this time three calls to vacant churches. It was over these calls that he was thinking so profoundly. There was much to be considered, possible war behind them cutting them off not only from the home across the sea, but also from the only homes he and his wife had known in the new land. There were the children to be thought of, and deepest of all, was the seeking after Divine guidance as he went forward like Abraham of old, "not knowing whither he went."

The call from the Claverack church covered much territory, and there was also another feature,—this was a call to preach in the Dutch tongue. Mr. Gebhard's university training at Utrecht had somewhat familiarized him with the Low Dutch as it was called, but Latin was so universally used in the universities of the

FROM WALDORF TO ESOPUS.

old world, that the other languages did not hold an even chance. Still the young man was a linguist by education and inheritance, and he answered to the question of the committee from Claverack, as to how long it would take him to learn the Dutch language sufficiently well to preach in it, that he would do it in three months, which promise was kept to the letter. This settled the matter, and the Claverack call was given and accepted. Once more the young minister went forth into a strange land, a land which most surely the Lord had given him for ministerial labors, as he gave the broad acres of Canaan to Abraham for a possession. The fifty year's pastorate which followed was the proof and fulfillment of the wisdom of the choice made in the fear of the Lord, in the tarrying-place of Esopus, in the eventful year of '76, and to the young minister's inalienable right to the V. D. M. (Minister or Servant of the Word of God) which always followed the signing of his name in the early days, as it did that of many of the clergymen which the Old World sent to the New.

CHAPTER II.

CLAVERACK IN THE LOWER VAN RENSSELAER MANOR.

A sloop carried the family and their belongings from Esopus to Claverack Landing, for the town of Hudson did not exist at that time, a hamlet at the river connecting the great water-way with the growing settlement of Claverack further inland. The road from Claverack Landing to the parsonage lay through a most beautiful and fertile tract of country. There is a tradition that the name Claverack, which is a Dutch term signifying clover reach or field, was first applied to this country by Henry Hudson and his followers, when they sailed up the beautiful river which bears Hudson's name, in the good ship, the "Half Moon." All along the eastern bank of the river for miles, white clover sprang up spontaneously, covering bare tracts of land which had been burned over by the Indians, and giving the whole section the appearance of blos-

THE LOWER VAN RENSSELAER MANOR.

soming fields.

The name Claverack was first given to the stretch of the river including Kinderhook, Claverack Landing, and Livingston Manor, a flowering land of clover blossoms, covering three quarters of what is now Columbia county. At a later date Kinderhook and Livingston Manor were not included in the district going under this name.

The wagon-road lay along Claverack creek which was bordered by fertile flats. On either side of the road were nut trees and wild plums, with wild grape vines festooning the tree trunks, while stretches of fields between were dyed red with wild strawberries. Set down in the midst of these beauties and gifts of nature, were farms and homesteads, and great tracts of woodland inviting the settler with their abundance of timber for building purposes.

The sight of the red brick parsonage with its gambrel roof behind the pear trees, must have been a pleasant one to the little family driven out from their late home. The parsonage was built near the church and on the post-road, both church and parsonage overlooking a wide sweep of valley and upland, to the

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Hudson river and the Catskill mountains beyond. Doubtless the extended view differed from that of to-day, in that much of the present cleared land and cultivated farms was then woodland, but the stretch of woods and river, mountains and blue sky and magnificent sunsets, held that day as now, a grandeur seldom equaled in the location of our early churches. But this was no ordinary church situated in a convenient spot in a rural community. No general was ever placed at a more strategic point for wide-sweeping influence, than this young city Dominie, undertaking a country charge. The church property of Claverack lay within the Lower Manor of Rensselaerwick, and near the border of Livingston Manor.

This district was a part of the great purchase of land made by Kiliaen Van Rensselaer in 1637, and was subject to the rule of the Lord of the Manor. But the Patroon of that day found it difficult to control matters in this distant corner of his vast estate, so in 1704, he conveyed to his younger brother Hendrick, a large tract of land in the southern part of the Manor known by the name of Claverack, which covered one hundred and seventy thousand acres, and also one thousand



FORT CRAILO

Erected in 1642 by Kiljaen Van Rensselaer.

The home of the Patroons of the Lower Manor of Rensselaerwick.

THE LOWER VAN RENSSELAER MANOR.

acres of the Upper Manor on the east side of the river, including the site of Greenbush.

Hendrick removed to Claverack with such of his friends from the older community of Albany as he could induce to join him, spending his time between the Lower Manor and Fort Crailo, which stood on the northern portion of his domain.

Fort Crailo, which was named after the family estate near Amsterdam, Holland, had been built in 1642, a stone in the cellar wall containing the inscription "K. V. R. 1642 Anno Domini." The initials stand for the first Patroon, and mark the date of the arrival of the first Dutch minister. It was a strongly built house with timbers eighteen inches square, and a chimney so constructed that nothing could be thrown down, and no one descend, a protection called for against the torches of the savages. As it was intended originally for purposes of defense, it contained nine musket or port-holes through which to project a rifle.

There is a tradition that the Ten Broecks, Mulders, Hogebooms, Bensons, and Van Cortlandts came with the Van Rensselaers from Holland, as neighbors, not tenants, since they are not in the list of those who

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took the oath of allegiance to the first Patroon. That their children were named for the Van Rensselaers who were their sponsors in baptism, proves the friendly feeling existing between the families, and that Cornelis Stephense Mulder purchased of Hendrick Van Rensselaer one thousand acres in the town of Claverack as early as 1718, would make it appear that this family might have been among the Albany friends whom he persuaded to settle in his "Lower Manor."

The greater part of the early settlers of Claverack brought some pecuniary means with them from Holland, and often were accompanied by servants. These first comers also brought with them, household articles familiar in the home-land, "waffle-tongs, pewter platters, high back settles, long stemmed pipes, punch bowls, many utensils in brass and copper, and Dutch Bibles. In some instances they brought whole ship-loads of bricks to build houses after the pattern of those left behind," but this latter feature of home reproduction does not seem to have obtained at Claverack; where there were brick kilns at a very early date, from the product of which the brick houses in the vicinity were built. The home-made bricks were

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of good workmanship as was also the mortar, the making of the latter being a lost art to-day, for it is said that a nail driven in between the bricks will break before it can be drawn out again.

Hendrick Van Rensselaer did not exercise his privileges as Lord of the Manor, but was active in the establishment of a church and other measures for the good of the settlers. Through the "upwaking" of the Patroon, and "out of regard for the aged and infirm, women and children," grew the desire to build a church and secure a settled minister. Their first attempt in this worthy cause failed, and the good people of Claverack laid it to the fact, "that because of their sins God was not pleased to crown their efforts with success." During the time that they were without a settled minister, Claverack was a preaching station of the ministers from Albany, who administered the Sacraments and preached from time to time.

However, they did not give up with the first failure, for in 1726 a church was erected near where the Court House stood at a later date. There were only twenty-six pews in this primitive building, six of them being long benches ranged along the walls and occupied by

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the men, the remaining twenty which faced the pulpit were set aside for the women, and each individual member had his own appointed seat allotted to him by a committee. So high was the pulpit in this sanctuary, and so near to heaven its elevated position, that it was reached by a ladder. Jacob's dream, in which he saw the angels ascending, and descending from heaven could not but have been realistic to a people who saw their pastor ascend this clerical ladder Sabbath by Sabbath, before unfolding to them the Scriptures.

Fifty years had passed since the building of the first church. During that time there had been a short settled pastorate, and a long season of twenty-eight years when the church was without a pastor, and the men who occupied the elevated pulpit at rare intervals were from the nearest churches, which were not very near, Albany, Schenectady, and Rhinebeck sending the most frequent supplies. But in the year 1756 the Claverack flock again had a shepherd, Rev. Johannes Casparus Fryenmoet. His call was a joint one from Claverack, Kinderhook, and Livingston Manor, and his pastorate continued until 1770 when he withdrew to give his full service to the churches of Kinderhook and

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Schodack. During his ministry had occurred the building of the church of which Mr. Gebhard had become pastor.

Hendrick Van Rensselaer, the brother of Killian the Patroon, had been gathered to his fathers, and Johannes his son reigned in his stead. Hendrick Van Rensselaer and his wife both died, and were buried at Crailo, in the family burial plot. In the annals of the day it is stated that news of the Patroon Hendrick's death was sent at once by messengers to all his relatives. Considering their number, and the wide district to be covered, one would infer that there must have been many lone funeral messengers, traveling the post-road and unfrequented bridle paths in many directions at this time.

Johannes Van Rensselaer added several extra rooms to the Crailo, and erected Claverack into a Manor, calling it the "Lower Manor," in distinction from the Upper Manor of Rensselaerwick, and was the first to exercise his lordly privileges. He was known as the "Proprietor" of the town, and up to March 24, 1772, when the civil government of Claverack began, with its formation as a district in the old county of Albany,

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the affairs of the people were managed under the general direction of the Patroon and some of the leading men selected for the purpose. At a later period these were known as a committee of safety or tithing-men.

Like his father, Colonel Johannes Van Rensselaer was interested in the building of a church, and conveyed a tract of land to the trustees of the Reformed Church in Claverack, "for the building and erecting of a Reformed Protestant Church, according to the Articles of the Synod of Dordrecht," and the church long went under the name of the "Van Rensselaer Kirk." It is a tradition in the Van Rensselaer family that it was built of Holland brick which were first taken to Albany, and then brought down to Claverack Landing on a sloop, the Patroon taking great pride in having Holland brick for his church. The building was dedicated November 8, 1767, the date of the erection still being interwoven in the bricks of the outer wall. The site of the old cemetery at the side of the church was set apart at the same time.

It was to this church, only a short distance from the parsonage on the opposite side of the road, toward which the young minister and his wife turned their

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steps their first Sabbath in Claverack. The beauty of the early summer was over all the land. Birds sang in the tree-tops over their heads, and wild flowers bloomed along their pathway. In the opening vistas between the trees were fields of early grain, while up the slight incline which led to the House of God could be seen the worshippers winding their way on foot or in springless wagons, father, mother, and long lines of children, for the Sunday school was still an undreamed-of church nursery. The women wore mob caps and white muslin handkerchiefs folded over their bosoms, while the men of their families graced the occasion in suits of homespun, with broad-brimmed hats and knee breeches, ruffled shirts, and buckles on trousers and shoes.

Many were the curious glances cast toward the minister's young wife, for were there not special interests connected with her being there? Young and attractive, she had known something of life in both Philadelphia and New York, a large portion of experience thought these country matrons for so young a woman. She was their Dominie's wife also, and that gave her a claim on the congregation, and the little child she held

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by the hand insured her a place in all the mother hearts. The tiny bell in the belfry was tolling its last call, and the warm grasp of welcoming hands had ceased, when she entered the church door with the ingoing tide of worshippers.

Cuyler Reynolds in the "Albany Chronicles" is authority for three of the following notes:

"1630—Patroon Kiljaen Van Rensselaer of Holland having authorized Sebastian J. Crol to buy land for him," he does so, "in extent there are about three Dutch miles." "July 27."

"1637—An additional purchase places the Van Rensselaers of Holland, interested in the Manor of Rensselaerwick, in possession of a tract twenty-four miles long, up and down the river, and forty-eight miles broad, east and west, or twenty-four miles inland on both sides of the river, an area of about 700,000 acres, including therein the counties of Albany, Rensselaer, and a large part of Columbia." "April 13."

"1704—Kiljaen Van Rensselaer conveys to his younger brother Hendrick, the Claverack or Lower Manor, and one thousand acres of the Upper Manor on the east side of the river, including the site of Greenbush." "June 1."

In the patent issued Nov. 4th, 1685, by Governor Dongan to Kiljaen Van Rensselaer, grandson of Kiljaen, the first Patroon, the Claverack purchase was described as follows:

"Beginning at the creek by Major Abraham Staats, (Stockport), and so along the said Hudson river southward to the south side of Vastrix Island; by a creek called Waghan Kasick; thence with an easterly line twenty-four English miles into the woods to a place called Wawanaquiasick; from thence northward to the head of said creek by Major Abraham Staats."

History of Columbia County.

At later dates there was much litigation and changing of boundary lines. E. L. G.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST CHURCH SERVICE—THE FIRST SUMMER.

The church of that day was not very much more than half its present size, nor had it a front tower or wings. It was only an unpretentious square brick building, with a tiny belfry on one end over the entrance door, but it was not the exterior of the church that would have held one's eyes fixed, and attention riveted at that date, but the interior where the Dominie's wife sat in the high-backed pew this early July Sunday in '76, on every side of her the members of a congregation who had been six years without a minister, and who waited eagerly for a pastor's form in their pulpit, and a pastor's wife in the minister's pew.

Above the heads of the congregation was a wooden ceiling with great rafters. The walls were plastered a shade approaching white, while the woodwork was painted blue. The pulpit was shaped like a wine glass

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and stood in the north end of the church. That also was painted blue and surmounted by a sounding board on which "Holiness to the Lord," was appropriately inscribed, and at the further end of the church was a large window covered with a red curtain. The elders and deacons sat at the right and left of the pulpit, and Colonel Johannes Van Rensselaer the Lord of the Lower Manor, held an honored place in his elevated and canopied pew among his army of lease holders.

As was the custom, a part of the service was under way before the Dominie entered. Beneath the pulpit sat the "voorleser" who was almost as important as the minister himself in the appropriate carrying on of the service. This dignitary began the service by reading the Scriptures, including the commandments, after which he gave out a psalm and pitched the tune. Now attention was divided between the Dominie and the Dominie's wife, for as the music of the psalm arose, a clear voice joined in the singing, whose flute-like notes were a joy to the music-loving High and Low Dutch people about her. From the first Sunday in the Claverack church the singing of the Dominie's wife never ceased to charm the congregation, and had there

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been any withholding of allegiance to the new-comer up to this moment, the opening psalm would have dissipated the last doubt.

The Dominie himself entered at this point. Of medium height and slight of build, he advanced lightly up the aisle, bowing courteously to the right and left after the genial German custom, then paused at the foot of the pulpit stairs with bowed head for a moment of prayer. It was a pleasant countenance which faced the congregation for the first time that morning, his bright blue eyes sweeping over the scene before him with an interest equal to that of the people. It was a pivotal moment for pulpit and pew, but they both stood the test. A liturgy was used for the service as in all the Reformed Churches on the continent. With a clear voice and animated gestures the Dominie began his discourse. We have no account of that first sermon, but have no doubt it was of the full length offered at that period, a carefully written, scholarly discourse, as proved by the time-yellowed specimens still in existence, with their fine chirography and minute marginal references.

Though the services of those days were lengthy,

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there were blessed breaks in the hours, which gave the children hidden away in the high-backed pews, occasional relaxation from the serious aspect of the remaining time. When the deacons stepped forth with their money bags suspended from long poles, and furnished with jingling bells, it is safe to affirm that all the youthful eyes in the church followed their course up and down the aisles, and childish ears caught the sound of tinkling bells after the deacons and their bags had passed from their sight.

Even on the first Sunday there seems to have been a feature of the service which never failed to hold the childish attention, or prayerful interest of the parents in all the fifty years to follow. Catherine Elizabeth Emerick, the infant daughter of Frantz and Elizabeth Emerick was baptized at that time, and for "Testium" as the old records have it, there were "Peter Adam Smit and his vrouwe." One can hardly grasp in these days of the over-churching of certain localities, and the possibility of reaching a minister at a few moments' notice, the privations of a God-fearing people stretching over a wide reach of country, far from the ministrations of a man of God. Baptisms were long

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deferred, marriages were only possible at distant periods or performed by civil officers, burials were often without a word of prayer. There must have been many heart burnings in the thirty-two pastorless years of this church, out of the preceding fifty.

As if the people called first for the sacramental duties of their minister, almost every Sabbath became a baptismal day. Long lines of parents and god-parents stood before him at the Sunday morning service, consecrating their children to God, while the Dominie's hand was laid in blessing on numerous little heads. Thirteen children were baptized during this first month of July, forty children during the remainder of the first year, and in the next thirteen years, one thousand one hundred and twenty-four children received the rite of baptism, and one hundred and sixteen persons united with the church. Nor was this all, Communion Sunday was once more observed, and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was again celebrated. According to the old Dutch custom, communicants left their seats, and group after group surrounded the Lord's table, where the elements were distributed to each by the hand of the Dominie himself. Christmas,

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New Year's day, Good Friday, Easter, and Whitsunday were also feast days, and new spiritual life began to show itself in the community, as the church once more threw open its doors, and the people went up to the House of the Lord.

The young people also grasped their opportunity. It was a summer of love-making. The young farmer dreamed of his sweet-heart in the fields as he planted and pruned and harvested, while maidenly hearts beat quickly when the lover passed at sunrise or nightfall, for was not the Dominie ready, and the time of harvesting of crops was near. Why longer delay the marriage day?

George Phillips and Genoa Ostrander were married in July of this first year. In September, Conrad Petri and Anna Margretta Stall from the Manor of Livingston drove over to the Dominie's for the tying of the nuptial bands. Every month after this had its marriage celebrations. Later, April, May and August became favorite bridal months. In time September and October and November sometimes saw two, three, or more weddings in a day. In fact all months were favorable for this joyful function, and no month passed

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without from two, to eight or ten marriages, the Dominie marrying four hundred and twenty-eight couples before the year 1789. Baptizing the children, marrying the lovers, burying the dead, meant something in this congregation. They were not occasional events, but weekly, and often daily duties.

Meanwhile life in the parsonage had settled into quiet lines and homely duties. The pastor's wife spun and wove and cared for her little boys, giving and receiving the hospitalities of a minister's household. Both she and the Dominie were possessed of a cultivated musical taste. In crossing the ocean from a music-loving German town, he had brought with him, as seemed to be the custom of the times, some form of merchandise whose ready sale in the new country, would make the early days of the stranger in a strange land financially comfortable. In this case the merchandise imported from Germany was composed of three pianos or spinets. Two of these were destined never to reach American shores, for the voyagers encountered a great storm at sea, and the two pianos which had been given special care in a place above decks, were, with everything else within reach, thrown

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overboard to lighten the ship. The third piano had been packed in the hold, and was saved. It became a familiar sight to the Claverack congregation to see the Dominie playing upon this piano, while his wife sang from a thick old book of German chorals of eight hundred pages.

CHAPTER IV.

WAR STORIES AT HOME.

There seemed to be peace and security in the gambrel-roofed parsonage in the country, yet even here there was reason for caution. No silver or pewter were used on the parsonage table after nightfall for fear of both Indians and Tories looking in through the windows and discovering it. The latter felt such a deep hatred for their Whig neighbors, that some of them hesitated at no crime upon opportunity. It became a custom of the times to build triangular passage ways in the houses, with three doors, one on either side, allowing of hiding and escape in different directions. Silver was thrown hastily under heaps of rags upon the unexpected visits of Tories, and in some cases the rags were pierced by bayonets without the silver being discovered.

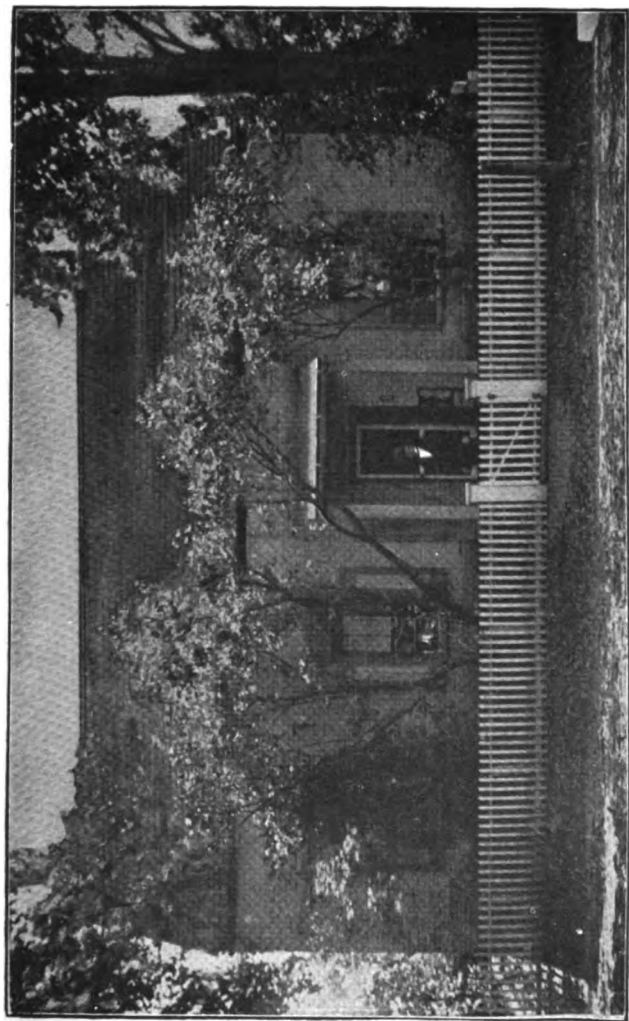
There was alternate gloom and rejoicing in the country all about, which could not but be deeply felt by

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both the pastor and his wife. In New York and Philadelphia they had left friends whose welfare in these turbulent times was an anxiety to them. Philip Livingston the brother of their neighbor of the near-by Livingston Manor, had been one of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence. Lewis Morris, the brother of Richard Morris, a member of the Claverack congregation, was another Signer. Every set-back of the war put these brave men's lives in jeopardy. The Dominie and his wife had left the Signers in Philadelphia and New York only to find them again, or their families, in this fair country place.

The Committee of Safety established and maintained a night-watch during the most troublesome times, consisting of twelve men each night, serving two by two for two hours and a half. Companies of Claverack men were engaged in the war, and many fears were entertained that the British might sail up the Hudson, and find even this retired settlement.

In 1777 this fear seemed about to be realized when General Vaughan landed at Clermont, and fired the residence of Chancellor Livingston and the Manor House occupied by his mother, in revenge for the



COURT MARTIAL HOUSE

Home of Cornelius C. Muller, where Court Martials were held, and delinquents imprisoned, during the Revolutionary War.
For many years the residence of Jeremiah M. Race.

WAR STORIES AT HOME.

prominent part the Chancellor had taken in the Revolution. The burning of Kingston had fallen heavily on the hearts of the little family at the parsonage, who remembered with gratitude the kindness they had received while tarrying there for a time without home or near friends. It also seemed to them that the destruction of war followed hard after them. The Livingstons of Clermont were in close touch with the Van Rensselaers of Claverack. Colonel Johannes Van Rensselaer the Patroon of the Lower Van Rensselaer Manor had married Angelica Livingston, a cousin of Robert Livingston 2nd, the first proprietor of the Lower Manor of Clermont, and many of the members of the Claverack congregation were Palatines from the neighboring Livingston Manor.

Like the weaving of a shuttle the news was carried from farm house to farm house, and from Manor to Manor along the Hudson. When it was known that every vessel in the river was burned or otherwise destroyed, that small parties landing from the British ships had desolated neighborhoods with fire and sword, and that at Clermont the family had hastily buried silver and other articles of value

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in the woods, placed books in a dry fountain and covered them with rubbish, piled carts high with articles necessary for immediate use, as well as preservation, and had seen the smoke already rising from their homes before they had ridden out of sight, the consternation of the countryside knew no bounds. Not even the Committee of Safety seemed sufficient under these circumstances to protect homes and property.

But hard on the track of the evil tidings came the news of General Burgoyne's surrender to General Gates at Saratoga, and the hasty retreat of Vaughan's forces; and trickling like a silver stream through a turbid current of misfortune, came a bit of gossip more pleasing to Claverack maidens than war and rumors of war. It seemed that Margaret Livingston, second daughter of Judge Robert R. Livingston of Clermont, afterward Mrs. Tillotson, had been knitting a long stocking for an old servant. There had been a wager connected with it that she should finish it in one day, and she had kept on with her work till near midnight, with a laughing perseverance determined to complete it and win the wager. She was nearing the end, when black Scipio rushed in with the joyful news

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of Burgoyne's surrender. In a transport of joy, the patriotic young lady threw down the stocking, and the wager was lost.

There was great rejoicing in Claverack also, and from this time on the war interest settled in more distant parts of the country. There is a tradition that Washington once encamped with a division of his army at Claverack on his march northward, but the story has never been proven.

The Tories continued to be troublesome neighbors. Captain Casperus Conyn, who held a commission in the Continental army, had leave to visit his family one night. The fact became known, and they awoke about midnight to find the house surrounded. Every window had a sentinel. The robbers, or Tories, carried away everything available, and destroyed what they could not remove. They emptied cream pots upon the floor and feathers from the beds and mixed them together, and helped themselves to all they could find in the way of jewelry and money.

At last they took Captain Conyn and with a cord from a drum hung him to a beam, but in jerking the chair from under him the cord broke and his life was

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saved. The family were all locked in the cellar after that, where they were guarded till near morning, when hearing a horse passing, the Captain broke open a door, and ran out to find a neighbor near. At breakfast the following morning Captain Conyn gathered his family around him, and offered thanks to God that their barns were still full, but it was not long after this that they were also burned by the Tories.

In the light of such experiences, and others already past, it would seem that the young pastor of the church showed both courage and patriotism, in taking from the pulpit once more a public stand for the Colonies against Great Britain. It is said that on this occasion one half of the men of the congregation arose and left the church.

Captain Conyn's experience had not been the only one in the neighborhood which had incensed the patriots. The Tories through this section of the Hudson river were collecting themselves together in 1777 to join Burgoyne's army. One division was composed of men who lived in the neighborhood of John Van Ness, between the villages of Malden Bridge and Chatham. A party from the Kline Kill neighborhood discovered

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that Abraham Van Ness, the old man's son, was home on a furlough, and watched their opportunity to make him their prisoner. The Tories at this time considered the patriots as rebels and outlaws, and organized bands to rob and arrest any active Revolutionist. Whole neighborhoods of patriots united to work each other's fields, leaving a small guard at the house. It was at a time like this that Abraham Van Ness was overpowered and captured. The Tories at first suggested that he be taken with them to Burgoyne's army, but eventually he was shot. In both the attempted murder of Captain Conyn, and the accomplished fact with Abraham Van Ness, the perpetrators were discovered and treated to summary vengeance at the hands of the outraged Whigs.

"Proclaim Liberty throughout the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof," was the inscription on the old bell in Independence Hall in Philadelphia, and when the boy who waited for the last name to be signed to the Declaration of Independence, ran into the street and called out "Ring, Ring," to the old bell ringer, the bell rang, not only for the brave "Signers," but for the men on the outposts, the men in battle, the committees

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of safety who guarded the homes, and the men in the pulpits who risked their lives as well, standing publicly for liberty and right, swaying public sentiment, counting themselves bound by their calling and their leadership to "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof."

CHAPTER V.

THE WASHINGTON SEMINARY.

In the after records of times of war, it is often forgotten that the paths of peace were still to be trodden, homes were to be maintained, children were to be trained and educated. Dr. Gebhard had hardly settled in his new parish when he was called upon to receive youths into his family, that they might pursue classical and higher mathematical studies under his direction. Some of these boys were sent from Philadelphia and New York. Many also were growing up about him, lacking even the elements of an education. His own youth had been favored in this respect. Before long he would have boys of his own old enough to educate. These combined reasons led to an effort on his part which resulted in the establishment of Washington Seminary at Claverack, in which project he was ably supported by prominent members of his congregation.

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A record of the first years of this seminary is still in existence. The whole account is kept in Latin, as Dr. Gebhard was in the habit of keeping other records committed to his charge. This is not to be wondered at, considering the statement of Dr. Livingston, who attended the University of Utrecht at a time contemporaneous with Dr. Gebhard's residence there as a student. Dr. Livingston says that at this period all the lectures were delivered in the Latin language, and before he left the University he could speak Latin almost as readily as his native tongue, "he thought, wrote, and even prayed in secret undesignedly in Latin."

A translation of the title and preamble on the fly-leaf of this ancient book, reads—

"The Seminary of Washington in North America, founded in the first year after the Declaration of Independence in the year of the Lord 1777, and erected in the middle of the War 1779."

"Most learned Master and Trustees, Richard Morris, Chief Justice; Hendricus J. Van Rensselaer, Petrus Weissmer, Jacobus Blattener, Jun, Stephanis Hoogheboom, Georgius Monel, Walterus Vroman Wemple,

WASHINGTON SEMINARY.

Hendricus Wilhelmus Ludlow, and Johannes Gabriel Gebhard having erected this Washington Seminary with greatest difficulty and unwearied labor, have admitted Masters Dudley Baldwin and Abraham Fonda, the first as teacher in the Latin language, the last as teacher in the English language, preceptors under the supreme jurisdiction of Johannes Gabriel Gebhard."

These trustees, together with David Sherts and Peter Mesick were large contributors toward the establishment of the Seminary.

The Constitution of Washington Seminary provided that "A house should be built which should accommodate Masters, Tutors, Ushers, and Professors; that Writing, Arithmetic, Latin, and Greek should be taught, and such other branches of Literature as the Trustees should from time to time find the means to support;

"The Seminary should be open to all persuasions.

"There should be eleven Trustees, of which the Senior Minister of the Reformed Dutch Church in the town of Claverack should always be one, the Governor of the State for the time being always one other, the Chief Justice of the State for the time being always

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one other, the Senior Branch of the Van Rensselaer Family holding the Claverack estate always one other, and the remaining seven elected annually by ballot. There were rewards for learning, and fines for disobeying rules. The Superintendent visited the school every day and reported to the Trustees, and taught the senior classes in cases of death, sickness, or absence."

The records begin June 28th, in the opening term in the new building, and continue through the following three years. The names of the pupils and their fathers are given, and to what class they are each assigned. Though the Academy was pre-eminently designed for a classical, higher English, and mathematical course, the elementary branches were not neglected, and we find the kindergarten here under the learned title of—

"A. B. C. darian children."

The "names of youth to be educated in the Latin language and admitted to this Washington Seminary in 1779," include John, Jacob, and Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, sons of Colonel Robert Van Rensselaer, and John, the son of Hendrick Van Rensselaer of Claver-

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ack, Henry, son of Walter Livingston, James, son of James Duane, and James Cochrane, the last three of Livingston Manor; Alexander, son of Gerhard Jacob Lansing of Albany, also Herman Ten Broeck, Charles Van Kleeck and John Dow of Albany, John Huyck and John Ten Broeck of Claverack, and John Thomas of Rhinebeck.

The "A. B. C. darian class" had among others in it, Jeremiah and Elizabeth Muller, William Van Ness, the Dominie's eldest son Jacob Gebhard, Maria Bay, Catherine Salisbury of Catskill, Elberta Hoozeboom, Jacob Philip, and Volkert Whitbeck, and as suggestive of the feeling of the period, Gabriel Esselstyn had sent his slave girl Anna to learn her letters.

In 1780 Henry Bedlow of New Winsor, and Robert Morris of Claverack were added to the Latin class, also William Nichol and Killian Van Rensselaer of Albany. It would seem that the learned languages were not deemed necessary to the education of girls at this time, since we find none in the Latin classes, but they abound in the earlier divisions, including English and writing classes. Each year discovers a younger child added from many families, Maria Bay

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is now accompanied by her brother, William, and Kilian Hoogeboom by Anatji, and the Dominie's second boy Philip attends school with his brother Jacob.

It will be seen that the Seminary drew pupils from Albany to Rhinebeck, but Claverack showed its pride in its seat of learning, and its desire to educate its children by sending pupils from nearly all its prosperous families, even during this strenuous war period. It is also worthy of note that having begun their education, no one of the pupils seems to have dropped by the way, but as long as the record lasts, the names repeat themselves. In a number of instances, with the Dominie as leader, a father offers a term of schooling to some other child beside his own.

The school books of the succeeding decades tell stories between their covers. Books, even school books, were valued in these early days of our Republic. A yellow-leaved, profusely illustrated copy of Virgil has on the inside of its cover, and scattered through the book, the names of "John Gebhard, Cornelius Miller, Gabriel Gebhard, John Van Rensselaer, Charles Gebhard and Robert Monel" with varying dates, and the statement "his writing" after each name

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as a sort of witness to the various ownerships. The margins of some leaves are worn far into the notes, which must have been a trial to the later owners. Loose leaves are carefully sewed together, and numbered in pencil, while at various points through the book are statements, such as—

“Recited here the 10th of July, 1782,” or “Thus far has Lewis Gebhard rehearsed this Book, June 14th, 1808.”

The blank sides of the historically illustrated pages were utilized by the young America of that day, to inscribe facts in their own youthful history. The last of these blank page legends reads—

“Jacob Rutsen Van Rensselaer’s
Property, New Haven,
And
Lewis P. Gebhard’s
Property, Claverack,
Dec. 6th, 1805.”

“Ego Carolus Gebhardus” states in Latin that he has mastered one-quarter of the book, giving date and year in the same tongue, or, for the moment forgetting themselves and their classical acquirements,

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a margin passes the information down the century, that their teacher, Andrew M. Carshore, was a "poet and a philosopher."

That their classical learning was utilized to make records still more erudite, though in boyish fashion, is proved by a mixed Latin and English meter of a young relative of the Gebhard family, which is a type of the times.

"John Bausman's Book."

"Hic liber pertinet,
Who can it deny,
Ad Johannem cum Bausman,
That clever young boy,
In Baltimoriensem Collegiam,
He is to be found,
Sed non morietur,
And laid in the ground;
Ab omnibus malis,
The Lord him defend,
In vitam aeternam
World without end.

Amen."

In 1780 N. Meigs was appointed principal and

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served until succeeded by Andrew Mayfield Carshore. The latter had come to this country with General Burgoyne as an impressed British soldier. After the surrender at Saratoga, he went to Kinderhook, where he opened an English school. Leaving this he came to Claverack and entered the family of Dr. Gebhard, where he acquired a knowledge of Latin and Greek. Dr. Gebhard's superintendency of Washington Seminary continued so long as it remained a classical academy, and the duties of his office were varied and unique. Beside an oversight of courses of study, and the general management of the school, he instructed its early teachers in the higher branches, in which they were expected later to teach their scholars. It is said that Mr. Carshore easily kept ahead of his classes in this parsonage night-school, but when, as occasionally occurred, the translation of an intricate passage escaped his memory, or the higher mathematical problems became too knotty for his lately acquired knowledge, the pupil was dispatched to the parsonage with his slate and book, or Virgil or Horace under his arm, and the President of the Seminary laid aside theological studies, to turn his attention to the scholar in a di-

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lemma.

This plan of peripatetic education could not have been wholly distasteful to a boy or girl on a warm spring day, when nature in every age has invited the boy shut up in the school-room to "come out," and it is questionable if the call of Claverack creek and a fishing rod, did not many times conduce to the infliction of the "fines" mentioned in the Constitution. Winter storms and snow drifts could not have been as pleasant, yet even these offered snow ball bouts, and we may venture to believe that the path from the Seminary to the parsonage was a pleasant one, and that the Master's stumbling blocks were eagerly watched for by the students.

In time Mr. Carshore became an able teacher, a man of unusual genius and culture, and during the twenty-five years of his connection with the Seminary the institution became famous. Pupils continued to come from Albany, Poughkeepsie, New Rochelle, Livingston Manor, Hudson and Claverack, and at times Washington Seminary had more than one hundred students.

Among those educated at this period were General



CLAVERACK COLLEGE AND HUDSON RIVER INSTITUTE

The outgrowth of the old Washington Seminary

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John P. Van Ness, Attorney-at-Law and member of Congress, Honorable William P. Van Ness, Judge of the Southern United States District, Honorable Cornelius P. Van Ness, Governor of Vermont, Minister to Spain, and Collector of the Port of New York, General Jacob Rutsen Van Rensselaer, Secretary of State of New York, and often a Member of Congress, General Jacob Gebhard, Senator of New York State, Honorable John Gebhard, first Judge of Schoharie county, and Member of Congress, and Doctor Lewis Gebhard, for over fifty years a leading physician and resident of Philadelphia, Joseph D. Monell, and the sons and daughters of the Philip and the Miller families. These were all natives of Claverack. Ambrose L. Jordan, Dr. William Bay of Albany, Martin Van Buren and Robert H. Morris, and many others afterward prominent in public life were also educated in their youth at Washington Seminary.

Treasured among the old-time possessions of some of the Van Rensselaers, and other noted men who once attended Washington Seminary, are the written recommendations of Dr. Gebhard, attesting to the in-

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tegrity and ability of the young man about to start out to make his way in the world, outside of rural Claverack. The after career of some of these men would go to show that the Dominie was a reader of character, and the possessor of a prophetic eye where youths under his charge were concerned, as well as in larger matters.

The love of education had traveled from Heidelberg and Utrecht over the sea in the heart of a young German clergyman and scholar, and out of it had sprung a seedling from the older institution. In a new land it had trained the rising generation in old world literature and the scholarship of the day. A large part of the citizens of the Colonies fought bravely to win the country's independence. All honor to the men who risked their lives and fortunes in so noble a cause! But when the cause was won, the country called for trained men for rulers, intelligent citizens to obey the laws, instructed minds to meet new conditions. The old world would no longer send America its leading men. The United States would rise or fall as her own citizens met the great summons, and the great needs, and emergencies of an independent nation.

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This was the work to which Dr. Gebhard and the educators of his class consecrated their lives. With prophetic vision they saw a future for this country, and while other men fought on battle fields, they were laying foundation stones in the education of the youth of the land, for future senators and governors, judges and foreign ministers, and also presidents of the new Republic. They were training citizens and moulding the men of a nation, and in this work Washington Seminary bore a large share.

For more than a hundred years this Classical Seminary, and its outgrowth, the Claverack College and Hudson River Institute, continued a controlling power in the educational life of Columbia county, as well as drawing within its beneficent influence pupils from many States in the Union.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MINISTRY TO THE WILDERNESS.

Claverack did not suffer to the same extent that New England did through the enmity of the Indians. No great massacres occurred in this region, but there were occasional forays, and the carrying off of women and children in the vicinity of Kinderhook as late as 1755. These hostile incursions left for many a month a feeling of uneasiness and fear behind them, but as a whole the Indians were disposed to be friendly with the Dutch, who had treated them with great fairness. Still there were large numbers of them roving through the primeval forests which covered a considerable part of the State, and their lawless raids in other sections, and their use by the Tories in acts of arson and pillage, made their presence a source of dread and alarm.

The obligations of a pastorate which included Schoharie on the north, and reached to Dutchess county

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on the south, was bounded east by Massachusetts, and west by the Hudson river, required long and lonely rides over portions of country infested by both Indians and Tories. Such a field of labor would have discouraged a man of less fidelity and courage than Dominie Gebhard. Over a wide section of his extended charge the land was still in virgin wood, with here and there a small farm house. The roads were wretched, often little more than Indian trails. The Dominie's liberty, and even life, were sometimes in danger while passing the secret haunts of the enemy, especially in the rocky wildness of the country in the vicinity of Taghkanic. Yet it is the church of Taghkanic, of which we have the record, that at one of his quarterly visits the Dominie baptized thirty-six children at one service. These, with their parents and god-parents made a company of over one hundred.

So while danger lurked in the dense woods and in the rocky fastnesses, the courageous minister placed his trust in the Defender of the Faithful, and took his way to these far off lonely outposts, that the infants in these mountain homes might be sealed to Christ, and the Sacrament might be administered to their par-

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ents, and here, too, he oftimes found couples waiting for the marriage ceremony.

The sense of pleasant stir in the farm houses under the hills can easily be imagined as the Dominie's quarterly visit approached. From the home of the leading man in the little settlement, where the prophet's chamber was being prepared for the visiting minister, and the housewife's store of good things was being hospitality brought forth, to the various homes where a little stranger had entered since his last visit, the Dominie's coming was eagerly anticipated. In some homes the tiny visitor had been the first child of the house, in others the twelfth or fifteenth, but in all the christening robe was brought forth and bleached, and the tiny embroidered cap, which had probably already served its day with several children, was examined and tried on the new baby's head. Then the nearer family friends were invited to stand as sponsors, and before long every house in the vicinity had some part in the approaching great day.

Plain and rude though the little church may have been, it became a holy place to these country folk, when they partook of the bread and

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wine of the Sacrament around the Communion table, and remembered the Upper Room at Jerusalem. And often before the day was done, the beginning of one or more new homes was formed, when a sturdy young farmer brought a blushing country girl, that the Dominie might make them man and wife. When the Dominie left on Monday morning, having added many good counsels to his other labors, life had taken a fresh start in the farm houses under the mountains.

The fear of man was not the only danger lurking in the path of the good man on these long clerical trips. Wolves still roved the forest, and vast pitfalls were dug near farmhouses on the edge of the woods, to entrap the wild beasts.

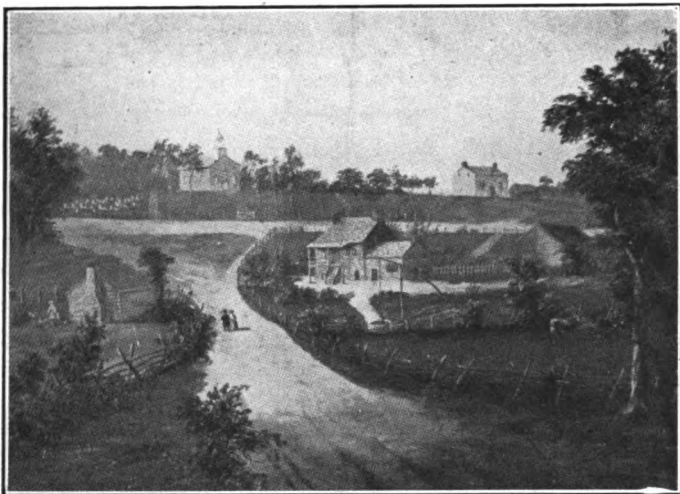
Yet in spite of all and every danger, we find this intrepid servant of God supplying the church of Squampawmuck (Ghent) twelve miles distant, every two months for five years. From 1777 to 1797 he traveled four times a year to Taghkanic. From 1795 to 1814 once every seven weeks he preached at the Krum church, twelve miles distant at Hillsdale; and upon the death of Rev. Mr. Clough he assisted in supplying the German church at the Camp (Germantown), and

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at the request of their consistory was instrumental in obtaining for them a minister from Germany.

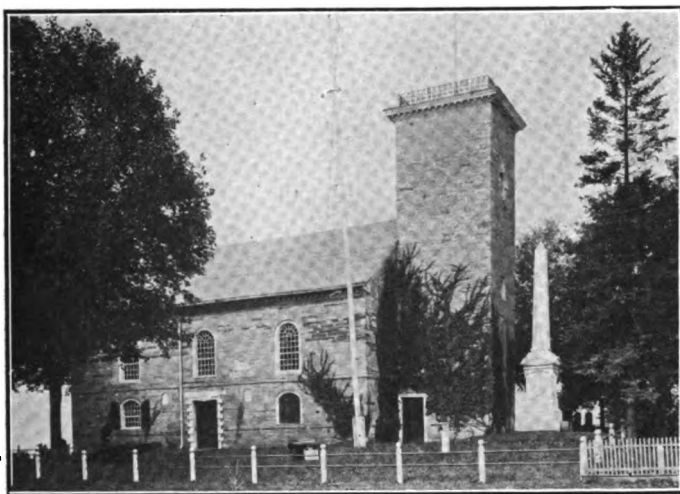
Of these various churches on the outposts, which were preaching stations of Dominie Gebhard, there is only one, beside the well-known church in the old fort at Schoharie, of which we have a full description. This is the Ghent church built in 1775. This primitive edifice was clapboarded in the early days and unpainted. Like the Claverack church, it had the old-fashioned, high-backed pews and also possessed a "lofty gallery on three sides, and a wine-glass pulpit reached by a winding flight of stairs. Over the pulpit and the preacher hung the inevitable sounding board, in this case suspended from the rafters by ropes attached to its four corners. The first records of the church were kept in Dutch, though the leaves of the old book, which was bound in vellum, and anti-dated the Revolution, bear a crown, and underneath in water marks upon its pages, the initials G. R., beside a seal, in which the lion rampant of England is a chief feature."

The first entry is March 28th, 1775, and records the articles of agreement between the consistories of Claverack and Squampamock. The next is a call



**THE OLD CHURCH AND PARSONAGE AND
WASHINGTON SEMINARY**

The view is taken from the rear of the old parsonage, and gives Washington Seminary in its earliest days.



SCHOHARIE CHURCH

Old Stone Fort, erected in 1772, and monument to David Williams, one of the captors of Major André.

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made upon the Rev. Dom. Johannes Gabriel Gebhard, in which it is stipulated that he shall preach once every two months, and administer the Sacrament in the church of Squampamock, in return for which the consistory promise, yearly and every year to pay him the sum of twenty pounds New York money." This call was signed by "Lawrence Hogeboom" elder, and "Johannes Hogeboom" deacon.

The longest journey in this ministry to the wilderness took the Dominie sixty miles over rough and almost impassable roads, to administer the ordinances and preach in the old stone church of Schoharie previously mentioned. In this church "Gersina," a daughter of the celebrated Indian chief Joseph Brant, was christened while the chief and his squaw were on a visit to the valley.

During the war small block houses were built in the south-east and north-east corners of the church and the whole enclosed by pickets, turning the sanctuary into a fortress. Here many anxious nights were spent by those seeking safety for their families from Indians and Tories.

The faithfulness of the men who upheld these

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churches on the outposts was portrayed by the devoted service of one of the members of the old Schoharie church. Judge Brown was for years the "fore-singer, clerk and chorister" of this congregation. To perform his three-fold Sabbath duty, he walked weekly from his home in Carlisle, fourteen miles, to the place of worship, and the same number of miles back again. It was not only the ministers to the wilderness who were courageous and faithful, but also the members of their flocks, who vied with them in upholding the worship of God in this new country.

Courage was the watchword of the homes of the day. It was required in every walk of life, from the wife or maiden who bade husband or lover a brave farewell, as he fared forth to fight for his country, to the young wife in the parsonage door, watching these repeated trips into danger in the Lord's service. Each pictured the way in the night watches, one of the bloody battlefield, and possible victory and honor, or death; the other of lonely winding roads or bridle paths, with a painted face or a Tory enemy behind some tree, and a slight form on horse-back winding his way alone through the wilderness, to come at last

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tired and travel-stained to some farmer's home, and a little log church, in which the light of the Gospel was ever kept trimmed and burning, by these ministers of God in settlement and wilderness, who like Paul "counted not their lives dear unto themselves," but only for the service and glory of God.

CHAPTER VII.

WAR HEROES OF THE MANORS AND THE INAUGURATION OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.

The War of the Revolution was drawing to a close. In the parsonage and the two Manors, and in the farm houses scattered between, there was eager expectation of a new order of things. There had been suffering and anxiety, privation and death in many homes. Soon after the election of Governor Clinton a public appeal had been made for funds from New York State to carry on the war. To this War Fund, Dominie Gebhard and his congregation had subscribed liberally.

Colonel Jeremiah Hogeboom's regiment had been made up largely of Claverack men. In Lieutenant Hendrick Van Hoesen's Company were Killian and Peter Van Rensselaer, sons of Hendrick, a younger brother of the Patroon Johannes, and through all the Companies the familiar names of Ludlow, Delamater, Philip, Harder, Hoffman, Esselstyn, Miller, Van Deu-

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sen, Van Ness, Groat, Mesick, Van Allen, Pitcher and a host of others abounded. Colonel Robert Van Rensselaer had seen service in the campaign of the Mohawk, while Henry I. Van Rensselaer served as Commissary-General, and nearly all the sons of Colonel Johannes, and his younger brother Killian Van Rensselaer held some commission in the Continental Army.

Captain John McKinstry, of Livingston, in the Regiment of Colonel John Patterson, had fought bravely at the battle of the Cedars on the St. Lawrence River, in the spring of '76, and had there met with a narrow escape from death in a more terrible form than battle. He had been captured by a party of Indians under the leadership of the famous Captain Brant. The Indians were about to celebrate their victory after their usual fashion, by killing their captive by torture. The fagots and the stake were ready, but Captain McKinstry remembered in that supreme moment that Brant was a Free Mason. He lost no time in giving the signal of distress which the chief recognized at once, and immediately directed his followers to liberate their prisoner.

In after years the two men were fast friends, and

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the Indian chief is said to have visited the man whose life he had saved, more than once in his own home. In later years Brant, in company with Colonel McKinstry, visited the Masonic Lodge in Hudson, where he was most warmly welcomed, and was an object of great interest to his fellow Masons. Charles Jenkins was less fortunate than Colonel McKinstry. He was taken prisoner by the British and confined a year and a half in the sugar house in New York, when he escaped and made his way back to Claverack.

While the men of Claverack and the vicinity were serving their country in the war, the women at home sometimes had reason to discover an undaunted war-like spirit within their own breasts. One day during the absence of the men of the household one of the goodwives of Claverack opened her door to two suspicious travelers. Their manner and words proved them to be Tories. The wife of the absent householder directed them to the cellar to obtain for themselves a refreshing cup of cider. As soon as they had reached the foot of the cellar stairs, she dropped the door in the floor and dragged heavy furniture upon it, effectually holding her prisoners until the return of

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her husband. That particular drink of cider proved an expensive refreshment to the Tories that autumn morning.

Brigadier-General Henry B. Livingston, a brother of the Chancellor, was one of the most prominent officers in the American Army during the Revolution from this section of the country. He served in an assaulting column in the storming of Quebec. "As Lieutenant-Colonel he commanded a regiment in the battle of Stillwater and was present at the surrender of Burgoyne," which was no doubt in part the cause of his sister Margaret's pleasure when she heard of the surrender of the British General. The destruction of his mother's and brother's homes he could not prevent, but further disasters on the Hudson, were forestalled by the successes of the army of the North. Colonel Livingston served under Lafayette at Rhode Island and Valley Forge, and became a fast friend of the French General.

He was also in command at Verplanck's Point at the time of André's capture, and with his single four-pounder engaged the British ship "Vulture," with so much vigor and effect that it alarmed and delayed An-

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dré, and in the end led to his capture, and saved West Point. General Washington, writing of this event, said, "It is a great source of gratification to me that the post was in the hands of an officer so devoted as yourself to the cause of your country." Lossing adds to this eulogy, "Washington's confidence was not misplaced, for there was not a purer patriot in that war than Henry B. Livingston." At the close of the war Colonel Livingston was made Brigadier-General and spent the remainder of his life at his home near Rhinebeck on the Hudson.

No event of the war carried such gloom into the allied homes along the upper Hudson as the death of General Richard Montgomery. General Montgomery had met Janet Livingston, the eldest daughter of Judge Robert R. Livingston some years earlier, when he was a Captain in the British Army, on his way to a distant post. It was love at first sight, and though the meeting was brief, neither of them forgot the impression made at that time. Montgomery, at the end of the war went back to England, sold his commission, and returned to America, and the second meeting between him and Janet Livingston led to an early mar-

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riage.

They had been married only three years, when his election by Congress to the office of Brigadier-General cut short their dream of rural life on the banks of the Hudson. General Montgomery accepted the position offered him with a high sense of patriotic duty to his adopted country. In this he had the entire sympathy of his wife who was a woman built in an heroic mould. Her love for him carried her with him as far as the home of General Schuyler at Saratoga, postponing the separation as long as possible, yet no word of hers deterred him from the path upon which he had set his feet. It was at the parting of the two, who had not yet ceased to be lovers, that Richard Montgomery uttered the memorable words, "You shall never have cause to blush for your Montgomery."

Montreal surrendered to General Montgomery, and on the last night but one of the year 1775 he made his brave attempt to take Quebec, and was killed while leading his men in an heroic charge upward, through a pass filled with drifted snow and ice, and in a blinding snowstorm. "Forward, men of New York. You will not flinch where your General leads," he cried

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out, as he pressed forward in advance of his men. They were his last words. He was killed instantly by the discharge of a cannon of a seemingly deserted battery. The attempt to capture Quebec was unsuccessful, but General Montgomery's brave act is the heritage of the American people.

The surrender of Cornwallis was an event of great joy all over the country. Friends writing from Philadelphia spoke of the watchman's cry in that city after the glad news. "Past two o'clock and Cornwallis is taken," rang out his voice hour after hour, and heartfelt prayers of thanksgiving followed the re-iteration of the glad tidings. Congress recommended the observance of a day of thanksgiving throughout the States, and Washington ordered the liberation of all prisoners, that they might join in the general joy.

At last when the news of the treaty of peace with England was received, the rejoicing was similar to that evinced over the Declaration of Independence. The news was hailed with delight when read in churches and courts, taverns and stores, and many unique methods were adopted to celebrate the event. At a later date there were a goodly number of certifi-

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cates of membership in the Society of the Cincinnati signed by General Washington, held by the men of Claverack who had been his officers.

Richard Morris' family had come to Claverack from New York during the early years of the war. Having espoused the American cause, they found as did many others, that New York invested by the British was no longer a safe place of residence for patriots. Richard Morris' brother Lewis was one of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence, his brother Gouverneur was a prominent patriot, and he himself held the offices of Judge of Vice Admiralty and Chief Justice of the State of New York. It is little wonder that the outcome of the war with England called forth special rejoicing in this family.

When the news of the treaty of peace reached Claverack, Judge Morris procured a barrel of tar and made a great bon-fire on an adjacent hill. There is little question that Robert Morris, his son, at that time a student in Washington Seminary, assisted most willingly at this form of celebration. Nor can it be doubted, that Robert Morris' life-long habit of firing off a cannon from the top of this same hill, on Independence

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Day, giving the hill ever after the name of "Mount Bob," was an outgrowth of this joyous celebration of his boyhood.

Dominie Gebhard was inspired to a different form of celebration by the treaty with England. He was a man of vision, as has been proved by his establishment of Washington Seminary. He saw before him a call for new forms of government. The present government was loose and feeble, as Washington said later, "We are one nation to-day and thirteen to-morrow; who will treat with us on these terms?"

On September 13th, 1783, Dominie Gebhard wrote his Excellency George Washington a letter, setting forth his ideas in regard to the new government about to be established, along the line of towns to States, and States to the Central Government, based on the government of the Netherlands. This letter General Washington acknowledged in his usual courteous fashion, and Dominie Gebhard's communication is still preserved among the unpublished letters and papers of General Washington.

Nearly six years later, April 30th, 1789, Washington was inaugurated President of the United States,

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Washington's journey from Mount Vernon to New York was one of continual triumph. Addresses and crowds met him at every town. At Philadelphia he was received with distinguished honors. The Schuylkill bridge was decorated with laurel wreaths and triumphal arches of evergreens. "As he passed over the bridge a civic crown was let down from above on his head, and a great cheer went up from twenty thousand people."

At Trenton there were similar demonstrations. Here on either side of a sweeping arch bearing the legend "December, 1776. The Defender of the Mothers will be the Protector of the Daughters," young girls dressed in white with baskets of flowers in their hands, sang as they strewed his path with flowers,

"Welcome, mighty chief, once more,
Welcome to this grateful shore,
Now no mercenary foe,
Aims again the fatal blow,—
Aims at Thee the fatal blow.
Virgins fair and matrons grave,
These thy conquering arm did save,
Build for thee triumphal bowers,—

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Strew, ye fair, his way with flowers!

Strew your Hero's way with flowers!"

He was received in New York by Governor Clinton and many distinguished persons, the Inauguration taking place in the old Federal Hall. There were religious and civil services, and processions throughout the day, but its crowning feature was when in the presence of a great multitude of old soldiers and patriotic citizens from many States, he stood on the balcony in front of the Senate Chamber, surrounded by men important in the life of the nation both then and later, and Chancellor Livingston administered the oath of office, prescribed by the Constitution.

At its close, the Chancellor stepped forward, waving his hand and exclaiming, "Long live George Washington, the President of the United States." Flags were raised, cannons were fired, and the multitude rent the air with their joyous exclamations. The new Republic was fully organized at last, with George Washington for its first President, the man most beloved and honored in the young Nation,

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MANORS ON EITHER SIDE.

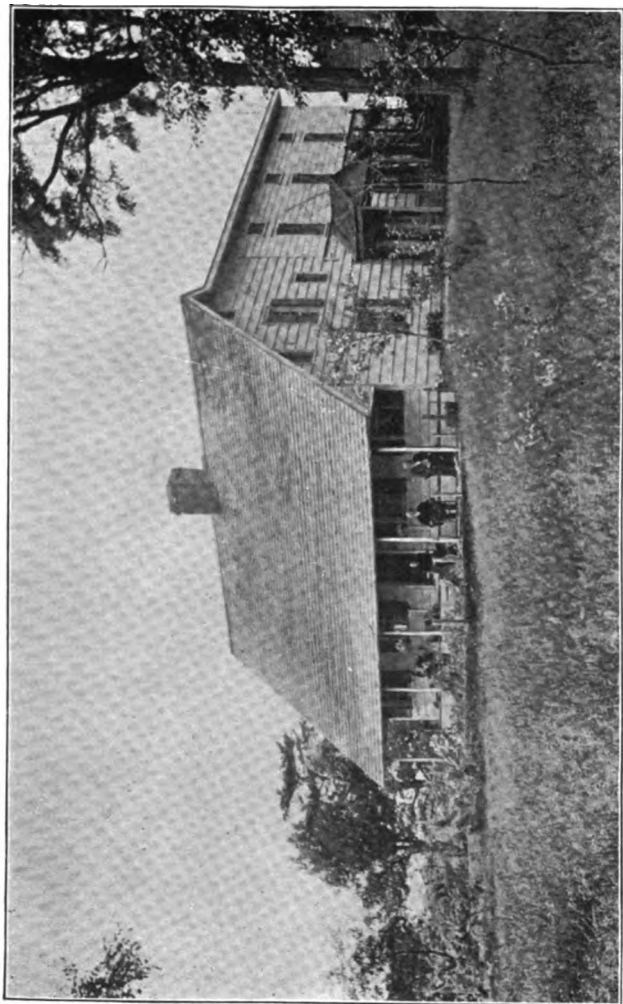
A few miles from the parsonage in either direction stood Van Rensselaer and Livingston Manor Houses. Those of the Lower Van Rensselaer Manor were the nearest, being a little more than a mile from the church. The Patroon Johannes Van Rensselaer, who resided at Crailo in Greenbush, but who had a summer home at Claverack, was living during the Revolutionary War, and was still directing affairs to some extent in the lower part of the Manor, though he had several sons who had married, and lived permanently at Claverack, who took charge of the estate in his absence.

It had been the custom of the old Patroon to make periodical visits to these Manor Houses of his sons for many years past, at which time rents were collected and much business was transacted. The house now occupied by Mr. Charles Barnard, a lineal descendant of the old Patroon, was occupied during the

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Revolutionary war by Colonel Henry I. Van Rensselaer, a son of Colonel Johannes Van Rensselaer. This house, the oldest building in Claverack, was erected by Hendrick Van Rensselaer, the first proprietor of the Lower Manor, in 1685. The first couple to live in it were Samuel Ten Broeck and his wife, Maria Van Rensselaer, the eldest daughter of Hendrick, and each of Colonel Johannes' sons seems to have taken his turn in living in the old house, James, who married Catherine Van Cortlandt, among the rest, though he eventually moved to Belleville, New Jersey. Killian Van Rensselaer and Peter, younger brothers of Johannes the Patroon also took up their residence in Claverack, and Killian built at an early date the house which was later called the "Brick Tavern."

On what is now known as the Allen Miller place, Colonel Robert R. Van Rensselaer, afterwards Brigadier-General, another son of the Patroon Johannes, built a Manor House. The foundations of this house were standing up to a recent date. The present Manor House on this farm, to the left, going east, was built by Jacob Rutsen Van Rensselaer, the first Robert Rutsen's son, as were also the "Red Mills" on the same



FIRST VAN RENSSELAER MANOR HOUSE AT CLAVERACK

Built in 1685 by Hendrick Van Rensselaer, the first Patroon of the Lower Manor of Rensselaerwick. Sometimes called the "Van Rensselaer Outpost."

Residence of Charles E. Barnard.

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place. On a section of land given to Henry I. Van Rensselaer by his father, the "Stone Mills" were erected, and after the Revolution a Manor House also. "Buttermilk Falls" was once a busy manufacturing center, the Van Rensselaer mills consisting of woolen mills, saw mills, satinete factory, and flouring mills, all being run on the same stream. Every farmer was said to have kept one black sheep among his flock, to make the proper pepper and salt mixture in cloth, the fleeces being sent to the carding mills at Smoky Hollow or Buttermilk Falls.

The Manors and the mills were contemporaneous, their necessity being apparent to Patroon and farmer alike, and so important a feature of the Manor life were these mills and the water-power which ran them, that in the indenture concerning the old Conyn farm near the "Stone Mills," sold by "John Van Rensselaer of Greenbush" to Casperus Conyn in 1765, "to him and his heirs forever" all rights to pools, streams, rivulets, ponds, and creeks were reserved to the Patroon, though if a mill was built upon Conyn's land, "John Van Rensselaer of Greenbush" agreed to pay for the land so occupied.

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"The Patroons had a monopoly of fishing and hunting, and possessed the absolute title to the soil." Their authority extended in judicial cases even to the penalty of death, each tenant in the Manor of Rensselaerwick agreeing not to appeal from the sentence of the Patroon's court. It was believed by these first great land-owners, that the country could best be developed by dividing the soil into large Manors, settled by tenants who paid for their holdings a yearly rent in skins or the produce of the ground, and who were often brought to this country at the Patroon's expense, while the Patroon himself paid a certain sum each year for the privilege of holding and controlling his own conceded territory, though it is surprising to read that the "quit-rent" on the Patroon's part was "fifty bushels of good winter wheat" for the whole Manor of Rensselaerwick. The rents required from the tenants were also ludicrously small in proportion to the size of their farms, and the Patroons took many obligations on their own shoulders which made life possible in this unsettled country. The early churches, schools, mills, sloops, imported machinery, tools and conveniences of

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many kinds, had their founder and originator in the mighty hand of the Patroon.

It is said that Killian Van Rensselaer, the First Patroon of Rensselaerwick, "was a nobleman not only by chance but by nature. He exercised genuine provincial sovereignty. By his direction civil officers were appointed to oversee the business departments of the colony and military agents were named to fortify outposts, and make needful preparation against Indian outbreaks."

It was Hendrick Van Rensselaer to whom Claverack was given, and most of the leases of land in the Lower Manor were acquired through him. The terms of the rental were nearly alike in all the leases, and stipulated for an annual rent of a certain number of "scheppels" (bushels) of wheat, and in many cases "two or four fat hens," the month of January being occasionally mentioned as the time of payment in hens. With the depreciation in the value of farm lands in recent times, there have been instances where legal rents have long remained unpaid, but, with a possible reversal to the ancient customs of forefathers, two fat geese have been presented at Christmas to the landlord as a

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kind of quit rent.

Colonel Johannes Van Rensselaer who erected Claverack into a Manor was born in 1708, and was the Van Rensselaer best known to the people of his own Manor, of whom it has been said, "He was a most commanding figure in the military, social, civic, and religious life of Claverack." Mrs. Ellet adds a word as to his other characteristics, "He was noted for his hospitality, and for his kindness and forbearance toward the tenants of his vast estate during the war."

In one room of the Manor House at Claverack, Colonel Johannes held court and received rent, and here many difficulties were adjusted, and much barter and some money changed hands on days when rents were due. Stored through the years with deeds of property and other valuable papers, are some of these old rent books. During Colonel Johannes' lordship, dating back as far as 1744, these rent books were written in Dutch, but the fact that "15 scheppel of wheat" constituted a year's rent for a farm in some cases, and that it was paid regularly, is still apparent in these deeply yellowing pages. Upon the payment of the year's rent, the Patroon signed his name with his own hand, or on occa-

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sion of it being signed by an agent, it was expressly stated "For the Patroon."

Later, in his successor, John I. Van Rensselaer's time, the records in these old account books are in English, pounds and shillings having taken the place of "schepels of wheat," and by 1795 Jacob Rutsen Van Rensselaer occasionally signs his name to the receipt. Nor is it only the sons of the family who when needed stand in their father's place. The wife of the Patroon, or sometimes the daughter, or the daughter-in-law, affixes her name in acknowledgment of rent paid. In 1776 Catherine Van Alen acknowledges the reception of "eight schepels of wheat," Collec. for John Van Rensselaer Patroon." Though the Patroon may have been the highest court of appeal, with tenants spread over one hundred and seventy thousand acres, even though far separated, one might easily suppose that pay-day would occur on many days in the year, and that any responsible member of the household would often be called upon to stand in the Patroon's place.

Colonel Johannes courted his first wife, and the mother of his children at the home of Robert Livingston, Jr., nephew of the first Robert Livingston. Angel-

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ica Livingston was a woman of pleasing and dignified presence, and of great executive ability, as behooved the wife of the Patroon of those days, and the Lady of the Manor. She had lived her early life in a home similar to that to which Colonel Johannes had brought his bride, and the training of the manorial homes was fitted to endow a woman with capacity for the management of social and business affairs, together with the rearing of a house full of children, and the direction of a corps of servants, which makes the strenuous life of to-day seem pale and languid in comparison.

The family of Clermont, or the Lower Livingston Manor was closely related to the original Livingston Manor at Linlithgo, and this again with the Van Rensselaers of the Lower Van Rensselaer Manor at Claverack, tying the great houses along the river in a chain of family connection, community of interests, and much social intercourse.

The home of Chancellor Livingston, grandson of the first Lord's youngest son Robert was at Clermont, and all along the Hudson from Clermont to Staatsburg were scattered the homes of his brothers and sisters, men deeply and keenly patriotic, and prominent in

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public affairs, through all the early days of the new Republic, and women whose patriotism and interest in the affairs of the nation ever equalled that of their husbands and brothers. Chancellor Livingston was already a prominent patriot, and a man whose splendid intellectual equipment was devoted to the upbuilding of the country. He had been one of the committee who had drawn up the Declaration of Independence. Fearless of the consequences, he had identified himself with a movement destined to revolutionize America, but at that early date the results of the responsibility assumed, did not always point toward victory, even to the hopeful. He was also chairman of the committee who drew up the Constitution of the State of New York, which had been read in front of the old Court House at Esopus to a large number of people.

At the old Livingston Manor at Linlithgo, the third and last Lord was reigning. Robert Livingston had come into his baronial rights in 1749 on the death of his father Philip, the second Lord. That the families of both the Van Rensselaer and Livingston Manors should have been, with few exceptions, noted for their intense patriotism through this critical period, is one

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of the noteworthy facts of history, for with the dawn of the infant Republic, would perish all dreams of New World baronies.

As with the Van Rensselaers and the Livingstons of Clermont, the children of the last Lord of the original Livingston Manor began building homes for themselves. Walter Livingston, son of the last Lord, erected a noteworthy mansion called "Teviotdale" prior to the Revolution. General Henry Livingston, another son, who had given valuable service to his country during the Revolution, built a house in that section of the Manor which was afterward called Johnstown. Here he kept bachelor's hall for many years, dying in 1823. It was John Livingston the fourth son who built Oak Hill, and who also gave the site upon which the Reformed Church of Linlithgo was built, adding a further gift of land. In recognition of this donation the village was called Johnstown, and the name clung to the growing settlement, to which in 1814 the Manor church was moved, a Memorial Chapel at a much later period, being built over the old Livingston vault, where the first Manor church had stood for almost a century, having been rebuilt in 1780.

CHAPTER IX.

LIFE ON THE MANORS.

Though the days of the baronial rights of the Manors were fast waning, the life of the Manors remained much the same for many a year. Saw mills had been set up by the earlier Lords in the midst of the forests, the machinery having been imported from Europe. Continuous building went on in the settlements, beginning with the felling of the trees, and carried through all the stages of preparation, until the work ended in a completed house, whose beams and up-rights, joinings and sidings, were of that quality of material and labor which outwear a century of use, and defy wind and storm.

Grist mills supplied flour and Indian meal to all the Manor settlements, and to many others for miles around. Great attention was given to stocking the home farm, for beef and pork were needed in abundance for the large families and many dependents, and

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also for exportation. Large droves of sheep wandered over the grassy slopes on the edge of the "Kills," forming pastoral pictures of great beauty, but in the shearing, spinning, and weaving time their practical value was fully apparent, when the blankets to be used in the Manor household numbered scores, and the wonderful woven coverlids of blue and white with the date of construction in the corner, were counted by dozens, and whole pieces of flannel, or linen in its own time, were laid away for clothing or napery, not only for the Manor, but for the poorer neighbors, to whom the mistress of the Manor was always expected to be a lady bountiful.

On the Livingston estate were docks, and not far away from the Lower Van Rensselaer Manor was Claverack Landing, where, when the Hudson was open, sloops came laden on their outward trips with salted meat, grain, peltries and lumber, and returning, brought cargoes of household necessities not procurable nearer home. Nor were the imports always necessities. Many luxurious articles of home embellishment were brought over the seas from the older countries. The rude and the luxurious were often blended in the

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latter quarter of the eighteenth century. West India sweetmeats and Dutch garden seeds, sought for right of way in the cargoes of the sloops, with silks and laces, and articles of feminine adornment.

The Lady of the Manor overlooked garden and farm, preserved fruits, stored vegetables, and put away meats in large quantities. Hospitality was a manorial custom. The post-road lay past some of the Manor doors and near others, and coming from Albany, or arriving from New York, it was not only the long-looked for letter that the stages delivered at the Manors, but guests of State, refugees from menacing danger in war times, and relatives or friends bound on jaunts of necessity or pleasure. It is said to have been the habit of the Manors of the earlier days, to have beds and supplies of all sorts ready for at least ten unexpected guests.

These manorial homes always contained, as did most other homes of the date, only on a larger scale, a number of relatives whom death or other misfortunes had placed in a position of dependence. This was a time when the solitary were literally "set in families." These relatives, together with the Lady of the

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Manor, made a superintending force, through whom the many slaves, and the workman of all kinds from carpenters to shoemakers, from tutors to tailoreesses, were kept in employment, the whole of the great working-force conserving toward one end,—the successful manangement of a great Manor.

Costly plate and rich furniture held their place amid the homely employments of a large country estate. There were wide halls and long drawing rooms, panelled wainscoting, and mantels with beautifully carved wreaths, and birds, and dancing maidens, above the tile-bordered fire-places with Scriptural scenes in blue and white. These fire-places were often found in several rooms in the house, and in front of these delectable picture-books, dark-faced mammies warmed the tiny bare feet of numerous Manor babies before the open fire, while they rehearsed to the wide-eyed, waiting children, the stories of Daniel in the lion's den, or Joseph and little Benjamin and the piece of money found in Benjamin's sack, or told the story, in the soothing cadence of the musical negro voice, of Christ blessing the little children, while the sleepy eyes closed, shutting into dreamland the picture of the children clinging

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about the Savior's knees.

Beautiful solid silver and white napery adorned the tables of the Manors, and although the ends of the knives were broadened, that they might the more effectually serve their purpose in taking the place alternately of both fork and spoon, and there were many other customs that would strike us as uncomely to-day, the life was lived on a large scale, and the conversation of a Manor table with the guests of note in the time of the making of a nation, might be envied in our own day.

Not only looking well after the ways of her household was the commendation of the Lady of the Manor, but she was also called upon to attend to her husband's extensive business operations in his long absences in Colonial councils, on journeys abroad, and during service in the war.

That the training of the Manor life with its alternate residence in city and country, its obligations, responsibilities, and its hospitalities, was in many ways fruitful of the best in manhood and womanhood, was proved in the fact that at one time during the early days of our country, nine men of the Livingston fam-

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ily were holding responsible public positions at the same time in different States; and in their service as officers, and soldiers in the ranks of the patriot cause, in the upbuilding of church and educational life, in positions of trust and honor, the descendants of Kiliaen Van Rensselaer the first Patroon of Rensselaerwick, have filled a large place in the building of foundations worthy of the American Nation.

CHAPTER X.

VISITING SPONSORS.

Two thoroughfares carried the traveler north and south past the Livingston and Lower Van Rensselaer Manors, and one of these passed the church and parsonage doors.

Sloops sailed up and down the Hudson, stopping at Clermont, and Claverack Landing, only four miles from the settlement of Claverack. These sloops brought and carried passengers and merchandise, and the larger vessels sailed away to the Indies and distant ports on commercial errands, called "ventures" in those days. The "venture" might turn out to be one of financial success to all who engaged in it, or through adverse winds and storms at sea, a loss of both lives and cargoes, and the ship itself. These "ventures" were often as interesting to the women of the family, as to the men of their households, for with the cargoes of merchandise of a practical nature, came many a

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wedding dress and tea-set, which were eagerly watched for in the homes of Clover-reach.

The first mail-stages began running after the Revolution in this part of the country, and mails were delivered at Claverack as late as 1790 for the city of Hudson. The travelers on the post-road risked none of the dangers of the deep, but stage-coach traveling had many drawbacks, as well as a charm wholly lost in these days of rapid transit by steam and electricity. However these obstacles to a comfortable journey did not affect a group of Seminary boys going home for vacation. Winter or summer in vacation time, the stage that stopped at the stage-house, where the post-road intersected the Columbia turnpike, dropped the weary and traveled-stained occupants who had come a long distance, and with a change of horses took into its capacious interior all the boys who could not bundle up on top, and went on its way with a happy rollicking crowd of human freight.

Pea-shooting was a form of youthful entertainment indulged in at the time, and the number and variety of targets to be discovered along a country road by a fertile brain, then as now, was not suggestive of brain

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fag. The boys who left the stage first, carried with them a sense of miniature battle, and themselves in the thick of the fight.

The stage brought many travelers to Claverack beside the Seminary boys. Some of these stood high in the counsels of the nation, or had served as officers in the patriot cause. Others were friends who had braved the dangers and discomforts of a long coach journey to meet old friends and family relatives. No one thought then, as we are apt to forget to-day, that the Seminary boys on the top of the stage, with their infectious laughter and pea-shooters, and hair trunks packed with the varied miscellany that only a boy knows how to collect, were the future representatives of the new Republic. So the country-side watched those who emerged from the stages, rather than those departing, and their scrutiny was not in vain.

Perhaps no one event was the occasion of bringing so many strangers into the town as the baptizing of the babies. Since, as the years rolled by, this continued to be one of the Dominie's most constant duties, and a common event at the Sunday morning service, and since the god-fathers and god-mothers who stood up

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with the children, were many times those for whom they were named, the church services came to have a special pleasure outside of the sermon and the singing of the long-metre psalms. More than once, when some little Catherine Van Rensselaer was to be baptized, or a Philip Schuyler, in the Van Rensselaer canopyed pew sat General Philip Schuyler and his Claverack wife, Catherine Van Rensselaer, Colonel Johannes' daughter.

General Schuyler had won great fame since he married "sweet Kitty Van Rensselaer," and "sweet Kitty" herself had grown into a comely matron, with the dignified air of a woman who had seen much of life, and managed a household, and dispensed hospitality to even a larger world than that of the country Manor. There were those in the congregation who had been guests at her wedding twenty years before at Fort Crailo, and the whole country-side had heard of its grandeur. Dominie Freilinghusen of the Reformed church of Albany had performed the marriage ceremony, and Claverack had never ceased to feel the keenest interest in Kitty Van Rensselaer and her young husband, and his increasing military honors. The birth



CATHERINE SCHUYLER

**Daughter of Colonel Johannes Van Rensselaer, the Patroon, and wife of
General Philip Schuyler.**

From an Oil Painting now owned by Mrs. Philip Schuyler.

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of her children and their prospects in life, and their various personalities, for the Schuyler children often visited their grandfather at the Lower Manor, were matters of neighborhood gossip.

Their mother had been beautiful as a girl, when she won the name of "The Morning Star." Her own daughters inherited her beauty. All this was an old but never wearisome story, but when General Schuyler and his wife came to the Lower Manor and served as sponsors for their nephews and nieces after the war, there was an added element of interest, for Mrs Schuyler had not only proved herself a most courageous and capable General's wife, but she had been a heroine as well.

Their home at Saratoga had been in the path of the British army. The cruel murder of Jenny McCrea was in every one's mouth, but Catherine Schuyler determined to save what she could of the things which were dear to her at her country home. Leaving Albany in her coach, in spite of persuasions to the contrary, she started with only one armed escort on her perilous journey. On the road she met with fugitives who urged her to turn back, but her answer had been,

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"A General's wife should know no fear."

At Saratoga the summer harvest was ripe. The fields presented a beautiful sight of waving grain. General Schuyler had warned her not to let anything of value fall into the hands of the advancing army. With a pang at her heart she gave directions to the tenants to fire their fields, and then went with her negro servant through the broad expanse of the home farm. It is said that the negro was afraid to set torch to the fields, and gathering all her strength Mrs. Schuyler threw the burning torches herself into her own grain at different points, and in a short time the fields lay shorn of their beauty, a charred and smouldering stretch of country.

With such valuables as she could carry, she returned to Albany where she arrived safely. Her fearlessness in this exploit and her ability to obey her superior in command in the face of great danger, won for her many encomiums, and the congregation at Claverack felt a special proprietorship in her bravery.

At times it was the Dominie's pew which was the center of attraction at the opening of the service, and when the time for baptism came, the Dominie's wife

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held in her arms a little son, while at her side stood the baby's Uncle John Roush of Philadelphia for whom he was named, or at a little later date Mr. Charles Seitz and his wife Charlotte Carver, also among the early settlers of Philadelphia, had come the same distance to be present at the baptism of another of their sister's children, this child also being named for a Philadelphia uncle. The beautiful christening robes with their vines and wreaths and flowers of the finest embroidery, the blankets to be wrapped about the baby in the cold church, the little caps, yellow with age, with their inset lace and many shir-strings, and the most exquisite of all the fine needlework of the day,—which have come down to us, almost picture the dimpling babies within their folds, and tell stories of the long country afternoons, with the sound of bees and rustling leaves, the odor of orchards and flower gardens, the prattle of children playing in the hay, and cows coming home through the meadows. What a wealth of life experiences went into the fashioning of the little garments, from the first stitch to the christening day, and with what heart-throes were they laid in the cedar chests, to wait for the grandchildren!

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The procession of babies moved on week by week, and year by year, till Catherine Van Rensselaer Schuyler's eldest daughter, Angelica Schuyler, and her English husband John Barker Church, came down in Henry I. Van Rensselaer's sloop, the "Angelica" or their chariot, on a hazy September day, to Claverack Manor, and on the following Sunday stood up with little Angelica Van Rensselaer, the infant daughter of Robert Van Rensselaer and Cornelia Rutsen. It probably did not detract from the attraction of this young Albany couple in the eyes of the country youths and maidens, that they had been the principal actors in a notable elopement, in which they had evaded even the careful eye of General Schuyler, until the nuptial knot was tied at the house of the young Patroon of the Van Rensselaer Manor at Albany. Morrisises and Van Cortlandts, De Peysters and Pattersons, Bayards and Nicholls, Gouverneurs and LeRoys and Alexanders all came from the outer world of cities and affairs, to stand up with the Claverack babies as the years went by, while the Dominie pronounced the blessings of the covenant over the heads of the baptized children, and the sponsors promised with their parents, to see that the

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children were "piously and religiously educated."

These baptism days were also festival occasions, and only second to the wedding days of the congregation. The gathering of friends from far and near witnessed wonders of culinary skill in great house and farm house alike, and the feasts spread before the visitors were long remembered by the departing guests, as the incoming tide of story and adventure, public affairs and family news, were valued by the host and hostess, and their growing families of boys and girls.

A tangible sign which has come down from these happy reunions, is the baptism spoon which was presented to the baby by the god-parent, in honor of the name the child bore. The baptism spoons were smaller, but carried a greater charm in their shallow bowls, than the larger funeral spoons or the rings which were presented to the bearers at funerals in those days.

It has been said of these times, that "marriages, baptisms and funerals were celebrated with great care and formality, and no more serious offence could be given than to neglect to invite to them anyone entitled to come, or a neglect of the invitation."

CHAPTER XI.

STORIES OF THE POST ROAD.

The journey was a long one from Philadelphia or New York either by land or water, but by sloop there was the panorama of the beautiful Hudson, New York and West Point, Newburgh and Kingston, all of them important in the civil and military happenings of the time, while by stage-coach one found the stage-driver familiar with every rod of the way, and the stories of the whole post road, the latest marriage in one great house and its grandeur, the achievements in war or State of the men of another Manor, and the beauty of its women, or (told with lowered and sepulchral voice) the story of the ghost that was supposed to haunt one of the Manor Houses after the mysterious death of a beautiful young wife. At Montgomery Place between Barrytown and Rhinebeck, General Montgomery's widow had built a beautiful mansion after her husband's tragic death. At another place near the

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same village, afterward occupied by his brother-in-law Peter R. Livingston, the stage driver pointed out Montgomery's willow, a large tree that had grown from a twig playfully stuck in the ground by General Montgomery on a visit to a neighbor, a day or two before he started for Canada. As he planted the twig, he had remarked, "Let it grow to remember me by."

With a wave of his whip as the stage neared Clermont, with special attention to the youth favored with a place beside him on the driver's seat, the genial Jehu would chuckle over the fact that Edward Livingston, the growing statesman, had been a boy at home, owing to the closing of his school at Kingston, when his mother's and Chancellor Livingston's houses were burned during the war, and enjoyed the excitement, and go on to tell of his eighteen mile walks to and from Kingston, Saturdays and Mondays, while school was in session, "short miles coming home, long miles going back," he would shrewdly add.

Or, if at a little later date, the history of Edward Livingston would pass that of growth into large attainment, as the eminent lawyer and Judge of the Supreme Court, and later Mayor of New York, "He is

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the greatest statesman of his day, men say" the stage driver would assert, and perhaps some occupant of the stage would carry the information further, for stage travelers were sociable on their long journeys. "Livingston is a great linguist, and his house in New York has become the gathering place of many celebrated visitors to our country." His personal qualities were also called in review with feelings of pleasure, his keen sense of humor which made him a delightful companion, and his warm-hearted beneficence, and love of his fellow men, which kept him in New York during the scourge of yellow fever in 1803, doing everything possible to prevent the spread of the disease, and for the comfort of the sick and the poor under these trying circumstances. At the close of his self-sacrificing devotion, he was taken with the disease himself, but owing to his strong constitution his life was saved.

This was apt to be followed by a eulogy on brave Margaret Beekman, Edward's mother, who would take no help from the wounded Tory soldiers in her home, and who, after they were safely disposed of elsewhere, could still courageously laugh at the ludicrous appearance of an old black woman, perched on top of a cart

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full of family possessions, moving away from the doomed house. As soon as the danger was over Mrs. Livingston rebuilt her house on the old foundations. There was also the locust tree still standing, which had been partly carried away by the cannon ball fired at the house by the British soldiers before they landed.

The "Hermitage" begun on a grand scale by Peter R. Livingston before the Revolution and never finished, but in one of whose quaint rooms the historian William Smith, a brother-in-law of the owner wrote a portion of the History of New York, attracted the traveler's eye. Beautiful "Teviotdale" stood on an elevation between Kleina and Roeloff Jansen Kills, a massive building sixty feet square, several stories high, and with dormer windows. After a time they would reach a point opposite the old Manor House to which the title really belonged, the road to which the post-road crossed. It was situated on a grassy spot on the banks of the Hudson, environed with grape vines, bowers, and gigantic trees, near the mouth and upon the north side of Roeloff Jansen Kill, which is now usually called Livingston creek. The original Livingston Manor

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House was still standing in 1799, a hundred years old, but it was taken down a few years later.

The tales of the lordly manner of life in the days of the first Lord, that Philip the son of the second Lord Philip, was a Signer of the Declaration of Independence, and William, another son was the patriotic Governor of New Jersey with many pretty daughters, entertained many miles of the road through the Livingston country. Patriotic Sarah Livingston was also a daughter of the second Lord of Livingston Manor, and she, too, had her story. She was the wife of Major-General Alexander, (Earl of Sterling) and accompanied her husband to camp at White Plains. Later she made a visit to New York accompanied by her daughter, Lady Catherine Alexander. It was at this time that she refused, even with the permission of Sir William Clinton, to take so much as a box of tea out of the city, which was under the rule of the British. She was also a loyal member of the Dutch Reformed Church, and as benevolent to the poor and needy, as she was patriotic.

As they approached Germantown the settlement of the Palatines became the topic of conversation. Many

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of these settlers had been drawn from Livingston Manor with its life leases, to the brighter prospects of perpetual leases on the Lower Van Rensselaer Manor at Claverack.

For these people, refugees from the Lower Palatinate in Germany, who had served in Queen Anne's armies, and had asked her aid, being driven from their homes by the ravages of the French, the Queen of England had attempted to provide homes upon her American possessions.

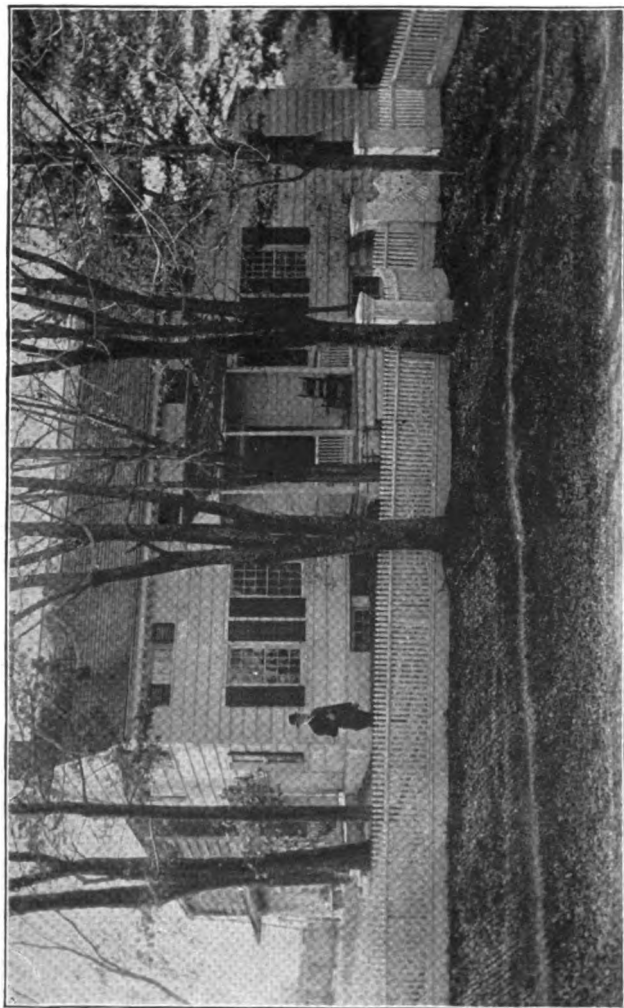
Governor Hunter had purchased a tract of land for the Queen from Robert Livingston in 1710, and the Palatines soon followed, settling on both the east and the west sides of the river. These settlements were in the nature of camps, which later gave them the names of East and West Camp. The camps on the east side which occupied the Livingston land, were named "Annsberg, for Queen Ann, Haysberg, for Lady Hay, wife of Governor Hunter; Hunterstown for the Governor himself; and Queensbury in still further honor of the crown."

The Palatines were not all an ignorant class of people. Many of them had come, as one of their descend-

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ants has said, with their Bibles and prayer books, expecting from the contracts signed in England, to have a small separate tract of land for each household, upon which they would be able to build homes of their own, and support their families, this land to be paid for at the end of seven years in lumber, tar, hemp, and the yield of the ground. Instead of this they had found themselves in the position of vassals, "slaves" they called themselves, bound to work at tar-making for life, and already the most intelligent among them were suspecting that the tar-making was a failure. At last their superiors discovered it also, and the Palatines left free to choose their own homes, scattered in large numbers to Schoharie and Claverack, where the opportunities offered to new settlers were a great improvement on those of the "camps." The few remaining families of the Palatines were allowed to settle on the land as farmers, and East Camp was known in time as Germantown.

If, for a time, his horses occupied the loquacious stage driver, there were sights and sounds in plenty to attract the travelers. Clover fields abounded all along beautiful Claverack creek, and the apples and plums



RESIDENCE AND GENERAL STORE OF STEPHEN MILLER

Built about 1765, and almost unchanged.

Occupied by Jacob Southard Van Wyck, a great grandson.

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and pears in their season filled the air with an aromatic odor.

Dutch house-wives were fond of bordering their vegetable beds with flower edges. Clove pinks and marigolds, tulips and tiger lilies, larkspur and phlox, wound their way in serpentine lines about homelier growths, while each side of the long path from the swinging gate to the front door, syringas and spice bushes, flaxinella and lilacs drew the guest with a breath of the gods, and generously swept their sweet odors over the garden fences, to the passing way-farer. And so the traveler was welcomed to Claverack, in the church and the homes, by Dominie and congregation, and also in the pleasant sights and mellifluous odors of Clover-reach, while the coaches which passed the Claverack doors, bearing from city to city, the men of the day in their high hats and the ladies in flaring bonnets and floating veils, with the blowing horn of the driver, and the spurts with other teams along the road, formed a large part of the excitement of Claverack life.

CHAPTER XII.

VISITS FROM JOHN JACOB ASTOR.

With the close of the war the German Reformed Church in New York of which Dominie Gebhard had been pastor, gathered once more its scattered congregation, and with one accord sent a call to their old minister at Claverack to return to his former charge. But the life of the young clergymen had sent out many tendrils since the day in which he left New York city, not knowing where in the future would be his abiding place. At that time he had two children, now he was the father of five, four boys and one little daughter, Charlotte, born four years previous. There was the Seminary which he had been the means of founding, the out-lying churches which depended on his occasional ministrations, and to whom his coming was as a torch that shed the light of the Gospel into the weeks barren of religious service or Sacrament.

Beside all this, there existed his own extensive con-

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gregation nearer home, with whom there had been formed close ties in these years of anxiety and danger. The parsonage and the glebe land were dear to his Pennsylvania wife, and healthful for his children, and once more as in the first instance, he believed that God had called him, this time to stay where his feet had been planted, and regretfully he declined the call to return to his old flock.

Yet though he decided to stay in Claverack, his heart turned with eager interest toward the future of his early charge. New members were being added to the New York church, with the changing population of the town, and the greater facilities for immigration now that the war was over. Baron Steuben joined himself to the congregation so soon as it gathered itself together once more, remaining a faithful attendant on its services when in New York, so long as his life lasted. At his death in 1795 a tablet was placed in the church to his memory, stating at the close of a long and impressive inscription, that it was given by "An American who had the honor to be his Aide-de-camp, and the happiness to be his Friend."

In the many changes of location that this church has

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undergone, in its more than a century of existence since his death, the tablet to Baron Steuben has always been carried with them, and in the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the church held recently at its present location in East 68th St., the tablet to Baron Steuben, America's friend of Revolutionary days, vied in interest with the bell presented by Kaiser William in honor of the celebration. There was also another feature of this occasion which connected with the past history of the church. Rev. John G. Gebhard, D. D., a great grandson of their old minister, participated in the anniversary ceremonies, while in the audience were Karl and John G. Gebhard, Jr., the fifth generation in descent from the old Dominie.

A still more important member, in the opinion of the family at the Claverack parsonage, was added to the New York church about 1784, in the person of John Jacob Astor, a young German from Waldorf in the Duchy of Baden, the home town of Dominie Gebhard.

Letters had been few and far between during the years of the war. Many a heart hungered for news of friends bound to them by close family ties, though

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the ocean rolled between. A year earlier a letter from Germany had reached the Claverack parsonage through the good offices of Benjamin Franklin, the writer being the Dominie's younger brother, Ludwig. The letter referred to the Dominie's loss of property through the war, but his happiness, nevertheless, in founding an institution of learning. It also told of the marrying and scattering to Zelt, Rotterdam, Frankfort, and Strassburg of the various brothers and sisters and their children, and their material welfare.

A touch of pathos blends with humor in the naive remark of the young brother who writes, "Our mother is still living. Do you remember, my dear brother, when we took leave of each other in Bingen, how our dear mother wept, and asked you what she was to do with me. Now you can see that it is never well to despair." There is a suggestion of coming to America, when peace is declared, if the mother gives her consent, with articles of merchandise sent by German merchants, and a return cargo of American products. Such letters, taking one back to the hearthstones of the faraway homes, must have warmed the heart of the wanderer even though the new home was

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becoming dearer each year. With warm German affection the letter closes, "Farewell to you and your dear family. I kiss you all in spirit, and remain for all time.

"Your Faithful Brother,

"LUDWIG GEBHARD,"

"Strassburg, Jan. 22nd, 1783."

But when John Jacob Astor raised the brass knocker of the old parsonage door, he outstripped the most vividly written letter, with his late personal contact with all that had been familiar and dear in the Dominie's youth.

Young Astor entered into the fur business immediately on his arrival in New York, and in a short time was making trips for his master to Montreal, the chief fur-market of the country. With a pack on his back he struck into the wilderness above Albany, but going or coming he was quite sure to stop off at Claverack Landing, or sometimes tramp along the Albany road direct to the parsonage gate.

Those were great visits, in which old and young had their own favorite theme of conversation. The boys were never late to supper the nights that John Astor came. Neither fishing, swimming, nutting nor gun-

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ning in its season, held a superior charm to the stories of adventure in the fur-trade to the Gebhard boys. Logs were piled on the open fire in the great fire-place on cool evenings, and bed-time was ignored even by the practical mother, while the boys' eyes grew large and starry, as the young fur-merchant told of the dangers of the wild lands in northern and western New York, where untamed animals abounded, of meetings with Indian chiefs, of baskets of toys or sometimes cakes, that would buy valuable skins, of the bogs that had delayed his journeys, or floating bridges with wide spaces between the logs, over which he and his pack must go in safety. There were his canoe trips up Lake George, and embarking again, on to the head of Lake Champlain, which held the boys' undivided attention. His companion on these occasions was an Indian paddler and guide; and again when the pelts were secured Indians transported them to the head of the Hudson where they were sent on sloops to New York.

Sometimes the Gebhard boys knew of some skins among the country lads, and young Astor picked up

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even at Claverack, a small addition to his stock in trade.

But the conversation did not always turn on the American wilderness, or its fur-bearing animals, or trade in skins. After the little ones were tucked in their trundle-beds, the older boys and the Dominie's wife sat by, while the two men talked of the home of their boyhood across the sea. Every man, woman, and child in the little village of Waldorf was familiar to them both, but Dominie Gebhard had left home twelve years before, so the younger man brought with him a fund of information full of a living interest.

John Jacob Astor had been the son of the village market-man, while Dominie Gebhard had been the minister's son, though his father had died when he was twelve years old, yet life in the German village had presented many similar duties and pleasures to each. Both boys had studied the catechism with great care under the village pastor, and after being examined walked to church in a procession, the girls in white and the boys in their best suits. After this came the rite of Confirmation and the Sacrament. This was both a solemn and a joyous occasion which took place

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every two years, and for which a girl or boy was supposed to be prepared, at the age of fourteen years. Besides Confirmation there were three other festival days, Baptism, Weddings and Christmas. These were all religious feasts, but the days ended in much sociability and innocent merry-making. Both of these young German lads also had younger brothers and sisters to care for, which all their lives made them tender with children.

After Confirmation the two boys' paths lay in different directions. Young Gebhard's lay toward school and college, but John Astor's father was not able to meet the expense of apprenticing him to a good trade. This however did not deter the boy. He did not mean to carry on his father's business, and kept his eyes open and his mind alert to find an opening in life to his taste. Here again the two young German youths had been moved by the same impulse, the love of adventure, and the desire to see the "New Land" across the sea. When young Gebhard left home, John Jacob was eight years old. Doubtless he had seen many other youths depart from the little German village. One of his own brothers had gone to America, and an-

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other to England.

John Astor meant to go too, and one day when he was nearly seventeen he started. No matter how uneasy a boy is at home, when he makes his first attempt to leave it, its value enhances by the hour, and a lump in his throat is quite sure to go with the young traveler, and spoil the first part of the journey. So it was with John Jacob Astor when he set out on foot one morning, a bundle of clothes on a stick over his shoulder, a crown or two in his pocket, to walk to the Rhine a few miles distant. Instead of a joyous journey toward the desire of his heart, it bid fair to be a dismal path of homesickness, until sitting down under a tree to rest as the morning advanced, he made some resolutions which gave him a grip on his melting feelings, and no doubt later on, a firm grasp on the best things of life.

These resolutions were three in number, "to be honest, industrious, and not to gamble." At this point he was likely to turn his eyes keenly on the boys before him, knowing that these were good resolutions for boys on both sides of the sea.

After this he went on with better courage. It was

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the portion of the story which followed, which always held the Gehhard boys' most eager attention.

Part of the great Black Forest is in Baden. The timber cut in the forest was formed into rafts, and rowed by sixty or eighty men or strong boys down the Rhine. These raftsmen were boarded during the journey, and paid ten dollars in money at its end. Many voyagers bound for the "New Land," earned their way to the coast in this fashion. John Jacob Astor resolved to do this and also earn his passage to England, and though it was hard work and three hundred miles to the coast, he accomplished his purpose. It required fourteen days to reach a Dutch sea-port, but the days, and even the nights, were made merry by songs and jests, from the hopeful and adventurous young lumbermen. John Jacob Astor reached port with a larger sum of money than he had ever possessed before. Here he took passage for London where an older brother had preceded him, and was at that time engaged in manufacturing musical instruments.

In London he worked hard and saved money, and learned English at the same time, gaining all the information possible about America, while he waited for the

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war to be over. At last he set sail, after word of the treaty of peace had reached London, bringing seven flutes with him for sale, and his savings for the years he had been in England, which were about five pounds in money. Each step of the way had called for courage and perseverance. Even within a day of port the wind died away, and the cold grew intense, so that the ship was frozen in a field of ice for two months.

But this final misfortune was the means of starting young Astor on his life work, and the after accumulation of his large fortune, for stranded in the same ship was a young fur-dealer, and in the long and wearisome days of waiting, while food gave out and money grew scarce, the two young men formed a friendship, during which time they confided to each other their previous life stories. It was from this ice-bound companion that Astor learned the possibilities of the fur trade, and day by day a hundred practical facts on hunting, bartering, curing, keeping and selling skins. It was a two months' schooling in preparation for his life-work, with an enthusiastic teacher who had just successfully carried through a sale of skins in England.

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Small wonder that the young man with stories of the Black Forest and lumber camps, Indian adventures, wild animals, and successful feats of bartering, was a welcome guest at the parsonage, or that the boys were wont to scan the length of the Albany road at nightfall, for a sturdy figure with a pack on his back, many a day before the young German came, counting his visits as festival occasions. Their father had a still greater regard for these stops by the way, adding to the mutual interests and sympathies of the past, the fact that John Jacob Astor soon became a member of the Consistory of the New York church, and its former minister and the new member of its governing body, found much in common in discussing the growth and prosperity of this well-loved organization.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHURCH CUSTOMS ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

The oldest of the Record books of the Claverack church, is bound in parchment, and tied with soft skin cords, and bears on its cover the inscription,

" KIRK EN DORP BOEK,
KLAVERACK

1727-1789.

and on its title page, "Glory to God forever."

It records among other matters of note, that during the building of the church in Dominie Fryenmoet's time, 1767, payment was made for seats through previous work on, or for, the new building, "breaking stone, riding stone, ditching the foundations of the church, cutting fire wood, cutting timber," etc. So much a matter of heart-interest was this building of the church by personal effort, that the record of the first "stick of timber" contributed, has been kept. As

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in many other instances, the first offering did not come from the nearest members, but over the road several miles away, from what is now Greenport, Joris Decker wheeled his "stick of timber," quite possibly prepared with his own hands from the felling of the tree, to the final delivery on the site of the new church building. That others followed heartily in Joris Decker's footsteps, was proved by the finished edifice a little later.

Seats began to be rented for money in a few months. Dominie Fryenmoet's call was to the three churches of Kinderhook, Claverack and Livingston Manor, each of which had its separate consistory. Although Dominie Gebhard preached upon occasion at Livingston, and baptized and married many of that congregation in its pastorless seasons, the Livingston Manor Church was not under the charge of the pastor of the Claverack church at this time.

Ministers' salaries of those days were not large, and the salary of the minister of the Claverack church never exceeded one hundred and fifty pounds a year, but with the aid of a small patrimony and the assistance of a most capable wife, Dominie Gebhard was enabled to give seven sons a classical and professional educa-

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tion. This was no doubt made possible by the purchase of a farm near the Stone Mills. Upon this place he erected a plant for extracting oil from the castor bean, for which he received a patent. A little stream running through the grounds was utilized to run the mill, and crops of castor beans were raised here annually, as well as in the parsonage garden.

Some old papers give points as to the payment of the minister's salary. The members of the congregation were supposed to contribute pounds or shillings according to their ability for seat rent, and loads of wood or bushels of wheat additional, for the parsonage use. It is noticeable in the accounts which have been preserved, that the loads of wood were generously given, but the bushels of wheat do not appear, bushels of rye or corn sometimes taking their place. Since wheat was already called for by the Patroon, as rent, it is hardly probable that a third division of small crops was compatible with home consumption.

Dominie Gebhard not only preached in Dutch in his Claverack church, but also in German and occasionally in English. The English sermons, however, were read from a manuscript, while in Dutch and German he

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preached extemporaneously. The record of the text of the first English sermon has been preserved as taken from Revelation 1:7. Since this was the third language in which he had been called upon to preach since landing in America, it was a noteworthy text and sermon.

Upon his arrival in Claverack he found the congregation divided over the erection of the new church, and some of the members still worshiped in the little old frame building, which stood near the spot where the Court House was afterward built, but by frequent calls and pacific intervention, he poured oil on the troubled waters, and at last drew the divided congregation together once more.

Sunday collections were recorded in columns devoted to "paper money," "silver," and "coppers," and in this same connection were headlines portioning space for "Money for the poor of the Kirk."

In these records names of Philip, Delamater, Harder, Snyder, Smith, Van Deusen, Stupplebeen, Miller, Gaul, Ten Broeck, Skinkle, Storm, Williams, Best, Moul, Ludlow, Van Allen, Van de Kar, Van Rensselaer, Bay, Leggett, Kittle, Monel, Milham, Sagendorph, Morris, Van Ness, Rowley, Mesick, Hogeboom, Esselstyn,

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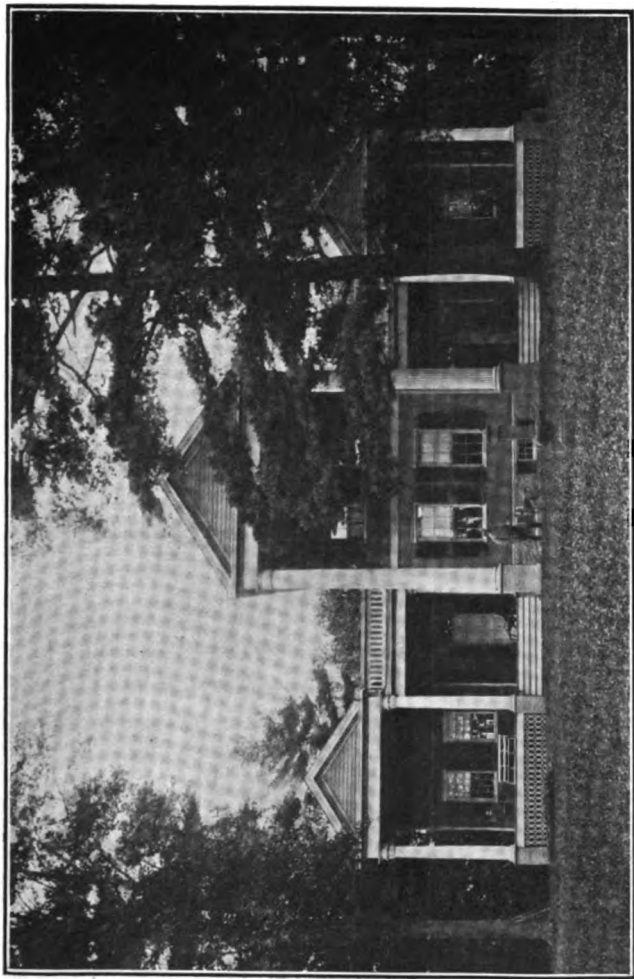
Shumacher, Lant, Hoffman, and Rossman abound, often five, six or more heads of families of the same name, or sons of one family following each other in a line.

Seats in church were allotted to each family with the number of sittings mentioned. "John Bay 7 seats; Philip Harder No. 44, 2 seats; No. 42 reserved for Rev. Mr. Gebhard; Stephen Hogeboom 7 seats; Stephen Miller 4 seats."

Two candidates were always presented in the election of deacons and elders. Both were placed upon record, and the number of votes received by each, indicated by successive credit marks after their respective names. When a member of Consistory was absent without a reasonable excuse from Consistory Meeting, he was fined one dollar.

A touch of brotherly kindness sometimes found its way into the records, as proved by the statement that the Consistory had made a "wood bee" for the Dominie.

Peter and Etje Hogeboom, twins, were baptized August 30th, 1795 with two sets of sponsors. They were apparently christened the day they were born. In-



THE VAN NESS-LIVINGSTON HOUSE

Owned by Van Ness and Hoffman Philip.

**Built early in the nineteenth century by Judge William W. Van Ness for his daughter,
who married Henry Livingston.**

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deed, from some closely connecting dates, it would seem that infants were often baptized at home, or on the festival days of the church. It must have been a usual sight to see the Dominie sally forth, prayer-book in hand, almost any morning of the year, to the house of a member of his congregation, where he was met by friends of the family ready to stand as god-father and god-mother for the little stranger. As these baptisms took place with great regularity when the infant was two weeks old, or a month at the latest, it would be inferred that the failure to present the child in church, did not suggest any negligence on the part of parents, or friends. However, in the time of Dominie Gebhard's English associate, it was expressly "resolved that infants shall be baptized in church, if both parents are able to come, and the child. If not, one or more elders shall attend."

For thirty-three years William Van Ness led the singing of the Claverack church, a commentary on the migratory nature of choirs to-day. In this same connection it was also "resolved that the Clerk of Consistory take his place immediately by the pupit, and pitch the tune and take the lead in singing the Psalm, and

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that he ring the bell, keep the Deacon's records, shut the church, and provide the water to be used in baptism," for all of which he received thirty dollars a year.

Divine service was to commence precisely at ten o'clock A. M. and after one hour of intermission the afternoon service began. The hour's intermission gave opportunity for partaking of a hearty lunch, and replenishing the little foot-stoves at the parsonage fire. Every wagon driving to church on Sunday morning, contained one or more of these little stoves, with their wooden frames and metal sides pierced with many holes. The door at one side allowed of the slipping in of a small fire pan, while a wire handle made it possible to carry the tiny furnaces safely. These little comforters traveled to church not only in the wagons coming from the farm houses, but also in the coaches from the Manor Houses, and women and maidens who walked over the snow-trodden paths on foot, came swinging their little foot-stoves in the icy air. It was considered a great innovation when, after 1800, a tin plated box-stove stood on its tall legs in the very center of the church, its long pipe going out of the window. This moderated the freezing atmosphere beyond the radius

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of the foot stoves, but it was still common to see one's breath in the air during the winter months.

The sands of the hour glass on the pulpit desk ran many races with Jack Frost as he nipped the fingers and toes of both Dominie and congregation. Preaching and listening both required courage in those days, and our fore-fathers surely did not expect to be "carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease."

The Dominie added teaching the catechism to the children of the church, to his other duties, though it is probable that this catechetical examination took place on Saturday afternoon, and was not a part of the Sunday service.

It seems to have been the custom of minister and elders to make a round of calls on every family in the congregation prior to the Communion of the Lord's Supper. On these visitations delinquents were dealt with, new members gathered into the fold, and occasionally votes were taken as to the sense of the congregation on important matters, members of the church signing their names with a mark distinguishing them from those who were simply supporters.

It was a custom of the times to add to each baptis-

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mal record in the family Bible, the name of the officiating clergyman, also the name of the minister performing the marriage ceremonies recorded in the same book. The Claverack Bibles, both Dutch and English, for many years bore the name of Dominie Gebhard repeated many times down these long lists of vital statistics.

So the years went by with a hundred aims and occupations, secular and religious, but through them all wove the golden thread of sacramental service, claimed by the people and given freely by the pastor, a drawing of heavenly things into the life of a wide-sweeping territory.

CHAPTER XIV.

LIFE AT THE PARSONAGE.

By 1800 the parsonage was full of children, and some of them grown to young manhood had left the home nest, and were writing back of the events of the outside world. The eldest son Jacob, lately admitted to the bar, wrote from Philadelphia in 1795 relative to the Connecticut claims on Susquehannah Lands, boundaries and titles and land claims occupying a large amount of legal attention in those days. In this case the charge of District Judge Patterson, formerly Governor of New Jersey, "was considered one of the most eminent ever delivered in this city," the young man wrote. "Titles, and Charter, and the Indian deed upon which the Connecticut claim rested, were esteemed as nothing"—Mulenburgh, the Speaker in Congress, told the young man that "there was little hope of Jay's return till the following October, the expected treaty to be sent over, not having arrived be-

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fore the rising of Congress."

Matters of public interest were laid aside to speak of a prescription sent to Claverack by the celebrated Dr. Rush. The writer says he was told that it was a simple medicine, but it would be well to let Dr. Monell, the family physician, see it. Dr. Rush had written with the prescription, that "he felt himself very much honored by the application from so great a distance." Those were evidently days in which the home practitioner sat in judgment on the city physician's advice, rather than followed with open admiration the specialist's skill. There were family remembrances to old and young, in which the Philadelphia relatives were each represented, ending with the word from the child in the Philadelphia family to the little girl in the parsonage. "Polly Seitz wants to see Charlotte down very much," and ending with the respect of the period.

"Your son and humble servant,

"JACOB GEBHARD."

For many years only one little girl had made merry in the old parsonage, with seven brothers. It is small wonder that she was a great favorite with her parents

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and the older children. The congregation named her affectionately "the Dominie's laughing daughter," and the chronicles of the time speak of her as "very active and sprightly with a vein of mischief in her composition." It had been customary occasionally to name a baby in some of the families of the church after the Dominie or his wife, for whom they were sponsors, and as Charlotte grew up she was admitted into this form of spiritual friendship. The name of Charlotte became a favorite among the mothers, and the Dominie's daughter stood as god-mother to many little girls named after her.

On his long rides to the outlying churches, her father delighted to take her with him, and we can imagine the dignified clergyman of the old school, and his sunny-faced daughter as they rode through the spring sunshine, over the wagon-roads and through the woods, that led to the churches of the tiny settlements. We know that she sometimes wore a white-corded dimity, sprinkled over with purple tulips, short waisted and low-necked, and it is not difficult to believe that the Dominie on his country rounds was doubly welcome when he brought his fair young

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daughter with him. A busy and useful daughter she needed to be also, with so many boys in the family, and within a year a new baby had come to gladden the home. After eighteen years, there was a second girl in the parsonage, who proved to be the last of the Dominie's children.

Deft of finger and quick of motion, Charlotte was her mother's right hand in all household matters. Spinning and weaving were a constant part of the day's work in such a home, or how would so many boys have obtained their homespun suits of pepper and salt. Knitting long stockings, too, was among the day's tasks, but that could be done in the firelight, while the boys were studying their lessons after supper, in front of the brightly blazing pine knots.

There had been long patient hours in the chimney corner, or out on the porch when she was a thirteen year old girl, at which time she made her sampler as all children did at that day. She learned in this way to make perfect marking letters, with which the family linen had been marked ever since. Such a sampler had woven into it a hundred experiences, and some tears. It was not easy to sit still and work her stint

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when the sun shone, and the birds sang, and all the sweet voices and odors of spring and summer invited her out of doors, nor yet when the boys teased as boys always will at times. But when her mother was making olekoeks in the kitchen, and the delicious smell was wafted in to her, with the promise of a large round doughnut when her stint was done, or when she and a neighbor's little girl sat on the porch steps together, and ran a race making a letter, even a sampler had its charms. There was also the end to look forward to, when the alphabet large and small was finished, and the numerals beside, and even her own name and age, and the year the sampler was completed, and one might fill out the remaining space with an imaginary house, with chimney and doors, bedsteads and chairs, and even trees in the door yard in front. This was the reward at the end of hundreds of painstaking stitches.

But at eighteen Charlotte could assist at the Saturday's baking, helping her mother and their slave girl Nan make pies and cake and bread, a feast for an army, it seemed, for the boys had great appetites, and the parsonage kept open doors for its many visitors.

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Katee, the slave boy, was called in from the garden on Saturday mornings to turn the spit before the great oven, and lay the logs in the fire place in the parlor, for the best room at the parsonage was sure to be used on Sunday, no matter how carefully it was kept closed on week days. This also was one of Charlotte's duties, to dust the Chippendale chairs, and set everything in the room very straight and orderly. Many ships came and went from the near by town of Hudson, which had grown out of the hamlet at Clawerack Landing, since the Quaker settlers came from Nantucket, and nearly every home was adorned with beautiful pink-lined shells, and curios brought from distant ports by the sailors.

The heavy wooden bookcase, with its double doors, and long narrow hinges, and wooden buttons top and bottom, shut in the Dominie's hoarded treasures of books,—many of them brought from Holland, and Germany, and France,—away from any contaminating contact. Charlotte sometimes opened the doors and took a peep at some of the unreadable volumes, part of them already one and two hundred years old, relics of her German grandfather's library, but she soon

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tired of so uninteresting an occupation, and closed the doors again on the odor of print and leather.

The large German mirror, with its rich gilt frame and heavy glass, was much more interesting to the young girl as she saw reflected there her own hazel-gray eyes and flaxen head of hair,—home spun dress and home-made shoes to be sure,—but beneath them both the rounded grace of girlhood. The dust-cloth was accustomed to many flirts at the girl in the mirror, and even a dust-cloth may feel in some occult way, the difference between musty books, and a pink-cheeked, laughing girl.

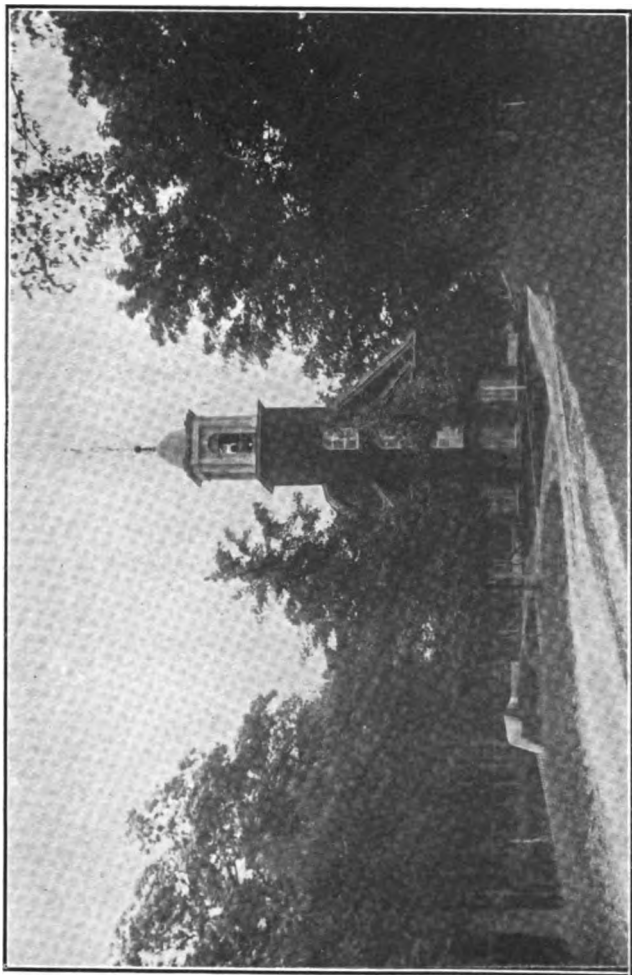
The German piano, on which their father played when their mother sang German chorals, was also in the room, but dearer to the hearts of the children was the piano which their father had constructed with his own hands, which was kept in the living room, and upon which they were allowed to try their own budding musical genius. There were but few houses of this date which did not boast some patriotic colored print, "Washington with His Family," "Washington's Reception in New York," or "Washington's Triumphant Progress Through Trenton." The girls of Trenton

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scattering flowers before the hero's feet, adorned the parsonage walls.

The boys, too, had their Saturday work weeding the bean and vegetable gardens, churning, drawing water from the well with the bucket hung to the long well-sweep, milking, getting vegetables from cellar or garden, bringing down hams from the garret, and perhaps, when all other duties were faithfully accomplished, there might be an opportunity for a Saturday half-holiday, to take a tramp into the woods with the sons of some neighbor to shoot wild turkeys or duck which were plentiful, and considered a luxury fit to set before the most honored guest. At night there would still be a trip to the stage-house, two boys on the old horse's back, to see if any mail had come, or guests expected, or unlooked for, had arrived.

One can imagine the long line of the Dominie's children walking up the wagon-path to the church after the Sunday morning breakfast of suppawn and milk, and quieted to a becomingly reverential behavior for the sanctuary. The Dominie is said to have reviewed his sermon as he walked up and down the living room on Sunday morning, the room being also filled by a



THE CLAVERACK CHURCH

Built in 1767. Called for some years, "The Van Rensselaer Kirk."

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half dozen children, with as many occupations, and the natural hilarity of a group of young people under such circumstances. The mother was the governing force among her lively group of boys and girls, and when the noise broke through the Dominie's meditations on the eighth or tenth head of his discourse, his attention being violently drawn from theology to the rising generation, his disturbance is said to have found vent in the forceful disciplinary remark, that "if they didn't behave and make less noise, he would call their mother and she would punish them all around," at which they settled down for a short time into comparative quiet, with half audible, though smothered chuckles of laughter, knowing well that their mother would not be called.

Among the Sunday morning baptisms particularly pleasing to the parsonage children and their young friends, were those of the tiny little colored babies, the children of the slaves held throughout the congregation. There were many of these babies, often named for their masters and mistresses, and their sponsors some Pompey or Flora of a neighboring farm, or occasionally their owners acted in this capacity for the

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little "niger," "nigra," or "nigri," as the records read, according to the number, or sex of the children.

These slaves were also the loving caretakers of the white children in the Claverack homes, carrying them about tenderly in their dark arms, or crooning lullabies to them in the twilight. Occasionally the well-beloved "mammy" was an Indian squaw, and the baby was tied to her back instead of carried in her arms, as she was accustomed to do with her own pappoose. With their mistresses' babies on their backs, these squaws often scrubbed the floors in the houses, with long-handled brushes, and in a hundred ways were indispensable to the life of the times.

CHAPTER XV.

LOVER'S LANES AND PARSONAGE WEDDINGS.

Sunday afternoon was the great time at the parsonage. All day there was an atmosphere of eager expectancy. Sometimes the Dominie was forewarned as to the need of his services, but often the young couples coming to be married at this time were wholly unexpected, except through past experience. Groups of young people would appear on pleasant Sunday afternoons, following one another, or meeting on the parsonage porch. All the roads which led to the Dominie's home were lover's lanes, and the couples who met each other riding in a chaise along the Albany road, or on the turnpike from Hudson, or walking through some leafy bridle-path, looked upon one another with interested eyes, the sympathy of kindred aims creating mutual recognition.

Here also, the Dominie's wife proved a god-mother.

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to many a young bride, with her wise counsel and motherly interest. The knowledge that ere they met the critical ordeal of the marriage ceremony, they would see the benign face of the Dominie's wife in its closely crimped cap, and her kindly eyes would look into theirs, and her helpful hands would come to their aid, smoothing rumpled finery, heartening the timid, rejoicing with the dominant note of happiness in the blushing brides and waiting grooms, made the path to the marriage altar a less awesome experience, than it might otherwise have been.

As many as six couples were often joined in wedlock on one Sunday afternoon, and one is not surprised that the old Dutch hymn book and liturgy bound together, should show its marriage and baptism pages deeply yellowed through much use, with here and there a torn corner of a leaf neatly sewn in place. A small marriage fee was required by law, but was not always forthcoming. The story of a young sailor who brought his sweetheart to be married at the parsonage, immediately before sailing for a distant port, suggests that the Dominie and his wife as the connecting bond in the life happiness of many, were remembered in the

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days of prosperity. The young sailor is said to have remarked, that at that time his only riches lay in his bride, but when he came back from his voyage he would remember the Dominie and his wife, which promise he faithfully kept, bringing them a barrel of oranges on his return.

These festal occasions also had their thrilling episodes. Parental authority was exercised strictly even over marriage contracts, resulting many times in runaway matches. There were rooms in some of the Claverack houses, which had seen a fair damsel imprisoned on bread and water, until she had consented to the choice of a husband, made by her father and mother. This form of selection of a life companion did not always remain unchanged after the imprisonment was over, as was probably the case with the young woman who fled precipitantly from the parsonage door, after coming to be married, exclaiming hotly as she sprang into her chaise and drove away, that "she would never marry that man." There has also come down the decided remark of an independent young woman of the period, commenting on a fair prisoner who had yielded her own wishes after such

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a course of persuasion. "P—— was a goose. They could have locked me up till doomsday before I would have married John Smith, or John anything else, when I wanted Jeremiah."

It was a time of gift giving and receiving. The country and city exchanged their mutual luxuries, and tropical fruits from Jamaica, Canton-ware from China, and Staffordshire from England traveled over the seas, as did also beautiful mahogany furniture and tapestries from France, and many other articles of value from distant ports. The town of Hudson, four miles distant, being the head of navigation at this time, brought a wealth of foreign luxuries and conveniences into the lives of the people.

It was customary to order sets of fine porcelain from China, decorated with a center piece of ermine drapery, on the foreground of which was a shield bearing the owner's initials or family crest. Governor Morris, whose son had been one of Dominie Gebhard's pupils at the parsonage, ordered on one of these voyages a set of fine china of three hundred pieces, with a border in deep blue, starred with gold, and decorated with the ermine and the initials J. G. G. in a shield

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upon each piece. These he presented to Dominie Gebhard, in grateful recognition of his kindness to his son. A large proportion of this set of china is still in existence, and one can fancy it adorning the parsonage table on festival occasions, and the pride of the Dominie's wife as dainty tea-pot and helmet pitcher, egg shell tea-cups, and blue and gold-edged plates decorated her board, with a background of snow-white linen, for whose spinning and weaving and bleaching she was famous.

There were apple-paring bees and quiltings, sleigh-ride parties and weddings in the country, but even the minister's family sometimes looks with envious eyes upon the gayeties of the world's people. There is a story of Charlotte's going to spend a night with some friends in Hudson, where she found an opportunity to attend one of the Assemblies. These were scenes of much life and gayety, also the opportunity for the display of most fascinating costumes in the fashions of the day. The young Patroon found the Dominie's daughter additionally charming in this new light, not suspecting that part of the sparkle in her hazel eyes, came from the excitement of the stolen pleasure.

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When he called the next day at the parsonage, prepared to rehearse the joys of the previous evening, the secret came out, and Charlotte attended no more Assemblies, in Hudson at least, though Philadelphia seems to have afforded an outlet in many ways for the parsonage young people.

The young Patroon appears on the scene again, with a request to the Dominie that his fleet-footed son Lewis might be allowed to compete with some young Yankees in a New England town in the vicinity, where races were to be run on General Training Day. Lewis had already made this request and been refused, as the Dominie did not consider it a sport befitting the minister's son, but the young Patroon pleaded well, pointing out that it would not do to let their Yankee neighbors feel that they could outstrip the students of Washington Seminary, when they knew that they had the swiftest man in a race the country round. The Dominie yielded through the pressure brought to bear on him, and Lewis and the young Patroon went to the race, accompanied no doubt by such students as stood for the athletics of the day. They returned footsore and weary, but jubilant, for the medium-sized, slight-

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ly-built, swift-footed German youth, had far outstripped the long-limbed, boastful Yankee, and they felt that Washington Seminary had won her laurels. It was thought at the time that the Dominie evinced all the pride in his son and the Seminary, compatible with his position.

The fleetness of foot of the youthful Lewis remained to his life's end. When he died in 1875, aged eighty-three, he was the oldest practicing physician in Philadelphia, and a man whose light tread and skillful fingers were renowned in the sick-rooms of the Quaker city. It was his deft fingers in 1808, which made a pen-picture of the church, parsonage, and Washington Seminary, as they then stood, which is the source of our knowledge of them to-day. The boyish training of eye, and foot, and finger served him well in after life.

CHAPTER XVI.

DIVIDING THE MANORS, AND THE CLAV- ERACK COURT HOUSE.

Three years after the close of the war the County of Columbia was formed. It cut off a part of Albany County and took Livingston Manor from Dutchess County. Thus nearly three-quarters of the new county was covered by the original Lower Van Rensselaer Manor, Livingston Manor, and Clermont.

A little more than a year previous, in 1784, Claverack had been divided between the heirs of the Patroon, Johannes Van Rensselaer, the heirs being his grandson, John I., only child of the Patroon's eldest son, Colonel John Jeremias Van Rensselaer and Judith Bayard, and his remaining children, General Robert Rutsen Van Rensselaer, Colonel Henry I. Van Rensselaer, and James, together with Catherine, wife of General Philip Schuyler. Several of the heirs already lived upon the land of the Lower Manor at

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Claverack, in homes of their own. John I. who succeeded to the house at Crailo and the manorial rights, sold the latter out of the family, and eventually they were owned by Mr. John Watts, a long-time resident of Claverack, and grandfather of J. Watts De Peyster.

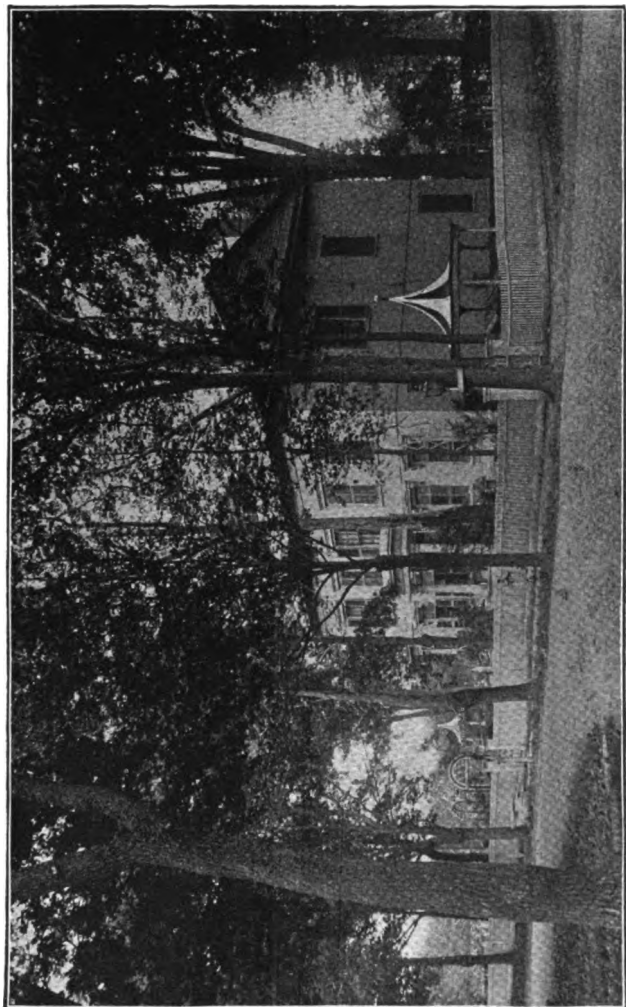
After the Revolution, though not until 1792, Livingston Manor was also divided between the children and grandchildren of Robert, its last Lord. In this division Robert Thong, the eldest son of Peter R. and Margaret Livingston, came into possession of the old Manor House and the surrounding land as a special bequest. Robert Thong built the house which is occupied by his great grandson Alexander L. Crofts to-day, the eighth in descent from Robert, the first Lord of the Livingston Manor. The remaining sons, Walter, Robert C., John and Henry, each received twenty-eight thousand acres, lying along the post-road from New York to Albany. In 1716 the first Lord of Livingston Manor had taken a seat in the General Assembly, and the succeeding Lords represented the Manor in the same way. Since 1772 Livingston Manor and Claverack had each sent one delegate to the Provincial Legislature.

In a very short time after the formation of Columbia

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County, a Court House was in process of erection at Claverack, which remained the county-seat until 1805 when it was removed to Hudson. There Elisha Williams, James Spencer, Francis Sylvester, the Vanderpoels, and other talented members of the bar engaged in far-famed legal conflicts. In 1789 Henry McKinsey and Timothy Jackson charged with horse-stealing were tried here. They were found guilty and sentenced to be hanged,—“severally hanged until respectively dead,” was the language of Judge Robert Yates, and in eighteen days they were executed in a field near by.

In 1804 Dr. Croswell was tried here before Chief Justice Lewis of the Supreme Court, for a libel upon President Jefferson, published in his paper the “Hudson Balance.” It was an occasion of great public excitement, both from the importance of the question, and the well known legal ability of the counsel on both sides. The people were represented by Ambrose Spencer, Attorney-General, and the defendant by William W. Van Ness and Alexander Hamilton. The New York Evening Post describing the trial, spoke both of the plea of Attorney-General Spencer, and the



CLAVERACK COURT HOUSE

Built in 1786. Where Alexander Hamilton appeared as counsel for the Patroon.
Residence of the Misses Crane.

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defense of William W. Van Ness, and then added, "After all came the great and powerful Hamilton. No language can convey an adequate idea of the astonishing powers evinced by him. The audience was numerous, and although composed of those not used to the melting mood, the effect produced on them was electric. * * * As a correct argument for a lawyer it was very imposing; as a profound commentary upon the science and practice of government it has never been surpassed."

Dr. Croswell was found guilty notwithstanding the brilliant defense, the case involving some fine points of law, as to whether the truth might be given in evidence, which questions were taken before the Supreme Court finally, and a new trial was awarded.

Again in the last trial conducted in the Claverack Court House, Alexander Hamilton appeared for the Patroon in the case between him and his Nobletown tenants, calling forth afresh the admiration of those in attendance. Among the most brilliant men of his time, and in the estimation of the American people second only to Washington, he had a double interest for the people of Claverack, for he had married

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Elizabeth Schuyler, the old Patroon, Colonel Johannes Van Rensselaer's granddaughter, and the daughter of Catherine Van Rensselaer Schuyler.

At the parsonage there were stories to tell also, how during Dominie Gebhard's pastorate in New York, young Hamilton had been a student at King's College, and had in the summer of 1774 made a speech on the Common. He was not much more than a boy, being at the time a youth of seventeen, and at first he had faltered, seeing the sea of faces before him, but soon his courage returned with the thought of the wrongs and oppressions of the last few years, and his youthful enthusiasm and eloquence had awakened exclamations of wonder and approval from his audience. Already he was silver-tongued, and it was not long before he had the opportunity to use his talent again.

The following summer a young company of Militia, called "the Heart of Oaks," whose members wore green uniforms, and leather caps with the legend "Freedom or Death" inscribed upon them, had been occupied in moving cannon from the Battery in New York. A British ship approached. One of their number thoughtlessly fired at the vessel, and they received

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in return a broadside which killed a young militiaman. The Liberty Boys were greatly excited, and part of them moved toward King's College, intending to capture the President, Doctor Cooper, a well known Tory. Hamilton, discovering their destination, rushed ahead, and standing at the entrance of the College, began an earnest speech, intending that the President should have time to escape. But in his excitement and fright, the President misunderstood, and leaning out of an upper window cried out, "Don't listen to him, gentlemen, he is crazy, he is crazy."

The laugh that swept through the crowd may have been as beneficial to the President's cause as Hamilton's continued oratory. At all events the escape was effected, and a company of youthful patriots were prevented from doing some rash act in the heat of their anger. John Jacobie of Claverack had been one of these Sons of Liberty also, and had assisted in destroying the leaden statue of King George in 1776, which statue was later made into bullets for the American army.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, Alexander Hamilton's fame was wide-spread, the achieve-

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ments of his brilliant intellect and honorable political career were acknowledged by all, even by those politically antagonistic to him. Though Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr did not meet in Claverack, they both visited this celebrated village. Judge William P. Van Ness was Burr's intimate friend, and Stephen Hogeboom, son of Jeremiah Hogeboom of Revolutionary fame, was a member of the Constitutional Convention in 1801, at which time Aaron Burr was President of the Convention. It was probably about this time that Colonel Burr, traveling by the post-road, stopped in his journey to Albany at a road-house later belonging to Robert Esselstyn. He was warmly welcomed, and hospitably entertained, but the language which formed the medium of communication between them was inadequate, for Dutch was the common speech in use in this section of the country, and Burr spoke English. Colonel Burr called for a napkin. The request brought about a family conference between the good hostess and her husband, which, two heads being better than one, ended in the triumphant production of a "kniptong" which proved to be a pair of pincers.

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The tragic ending of the duel between Hamilton and Burr has cast a shadow over Burr's memory, but in many of the acts of his life he was heroic and patriotic, and used his great talents for what he deemed to be the good of his country. There are those still living who remember his personal charm, and speak regretfully of the final clouded years of his life. In 1804 Columbia County gave Colonel Burr a majority in his contest for the office of Governor.

Following the removal of the seat of justice to Hudson, the Claverack Court House passed through various uses, being utilized both as a school and a hall for social gatherings. One of the descendants of Washington Seminary's most noted teacher, Andrew Mayfield Carshore, has painted a picture in rhyme of this latter occupation.

"The stately minuet's begun
In fashion's best array,
There's mischief in the twinkling glance
At every step's delay;
In clasping hands with blushing swain,
Full-robed in lace and velvet vain,
The lass can scarce from smiles refrain.
Throughout the measures of the dance,

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All sorts of terpsichorean play,
The hornpipe, reel, and jig are done;
But not before the risen day,
In ruddy blushes, looks askance,
That two (in parting almost one)
Should waste the hours in pleasure's prance
To swaying wand of Stephen Gunn."

After several years the building was transformed into an attractive and spacious residence, the home of Mr. Peter Hoffman. Under the summer house in the garden was once the dungeon where malefactors were confined; at the east of the Court House stood the jail and pillory, and up to a recent date the old whipping-post held its place in the cellar. The transformation was a pleasing one, covering the gruesome features of the past with a host of enjoyable associations and recollections, and only retaining the memory of the old Court House in its glory. Charming social events have taken place in this building, both in the olden times, and at a later date. It is at present owned and occupied by the Misses Crane, daughters of Mr. Hiram Crane, for many years a resident of the town.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOMES OF THE LOWER VAN RENSSELAER MANOR AT CLAVERACK.

The sons and grandsons of the Patroon of the Lower Van Rensselaer Manor had intermarried with the colonial families of Rutsens, Douws, Van Cortlandts, Schuylers, Livingstons, De Peysters, Wendells, Bayards, and Watts, bringing much intercourse with the active men of affairs of the outer world, into this rural community.

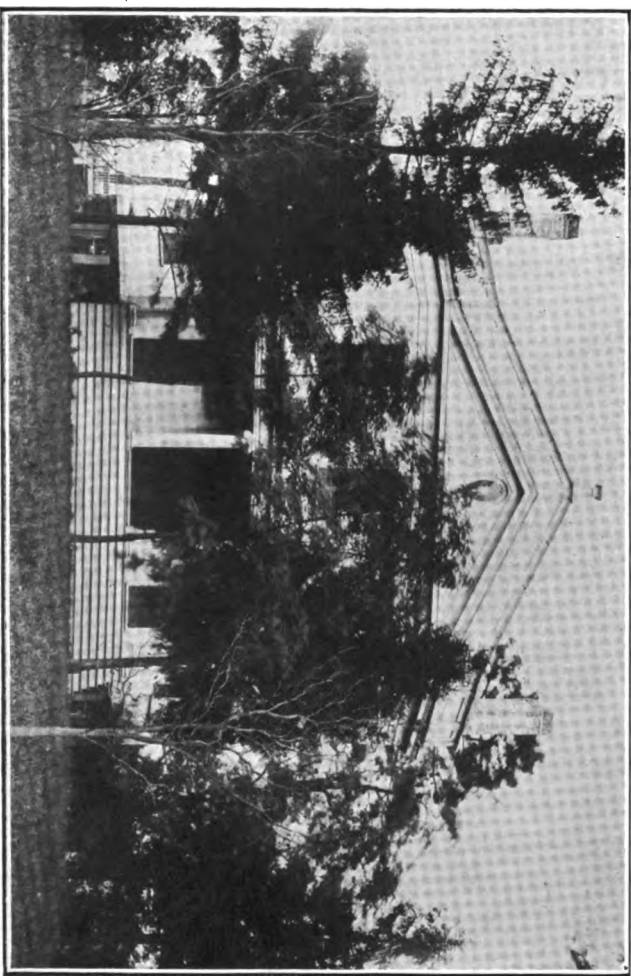
Into some of the Manor Houses families of relatives and friends were received during the war, affording as they did, a safe retreat from the dangers that threatened places more directly in line with the advance of the contending armies. The old church books record the names of more than one infant, born while sheltered at the Manor, and baptized by Dominie Gebhard, faring forth again to homes at varying distances when the war was over. General Burgoyne's advance toward

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Albany sent Leonard Gansevoort and Hester Cuyler, his wife, to Claverack, where their daughter Magdalena was born in one of the Manor Houses, and baptized the day of her birth by Dominie Gebhard.

It was against this same advance of Burgoyne that "Poor's Brigade" marched, enlivening the way by singing psalms, and in their service in the campaign covered themselves with glory

On the death of Johannes Van Rensselaer, the Patroon, his many possessions were divided between his children and heirs, and some of the most interesting stories of those days grow out of old chests and barrels stored away in attics for thirty, forty, or fifty years. A large part of the valuable china and silver owned by the family of the Lower Manor was buried at Greenbush during the Revolution. It is possible that this early need of caution was partially responsible for many relics being kept under lock and key in strong chests for years. We have one picture of a chest broken open by later descendants, to discover within a Lafayette platter picturing the landing at Castle Garden, with the Bay full of ships and small craft, and soldiers standing at attention on the wharf,



GENERAL JACOB RUTSEN VAN RENSSELAER HOUSE

Built soon after the Revolution, on the site where his father, General Robert Rutsen Van Rensselaer,
built an earlier Manor House.
Residence of Clifford Miller.

HOMES OF THE LOWER V. R. MANOR.

the deep blue color and glaze still uninjured. Side by side with the Lafayette platter were rolls of home-woven blankets, and delicate china cups with a thread-like border and a spray of flowers at the side, dating back to Holland and a century earlier than the Lafayette platter.

Another scene gives a family gathering at a cleaning-house time, that opportunity for the family historian, when the spectators sat about, as paper after paper was drawn from an old barrel, read and preserved, or thrown aside for a bon-fire as the subject interested or palled upon the listeners. From the same attic which discovered the Lafayette platter, and Holland cups, there traveled down stairs after many years, a half dozen old Van Rensselaer chairs with the date beneath the seats, giving them a place in Colonel Johannes' home, probably inherited from his father Hendrick Van Rensselaer, since they date back two centuries. The tall carved backs, and high carved legs, and small leather-covered seats, give an idea of the interior of the first Van Rensselaer home at Claverack, as do also the tapestries and the old mahogany desk at which the Patroon sat on many a rent day.

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Among the many heirlooms of value which have passed down the generations of the Van Rensselaer family of the Lower Manor, only one seems to be lacking. No portraits of Hendrick, or Colonel Johannes Van Rensselaer, the Patroons of the Claverack Manor have been discovered, or are at present known to have existed. At a later period in Henry I. Van Rensselaer's time, a prejudice existed among the Van Rensselaers with regard to family portraits, founded on a visit made to a manorial home, where an ancestral portrait was being used as a fire-board before a fireplace.

Though we have not the pictured faces of either of the Patroons who shaped the life of the Claverack of the past, we have a record of them both as promoters of the religious life of the community, as church builders and supporters. Their proprietorship also of the Lower Van Rensselaer Manor is a history full of honor, in which their care for the best interests of the town and the well-being of their tenants was a prominent feature. A beautiful bit of hair-work,—a mourning ring marked "John Van Rensselaer,"—is still owned by one of his descendants, an old-time

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memorial of a man who served well, and was an honor to his day and generation.

The numerous brass and silver candlesticks, and the many brass andirons, all suggest that light and heat were considered carefully and artistically, even though it was not after modern fashion. There were always footstools in these homes, dainty mahogany affairs with curved sides and bars at the ends, and often carved, telling of consideration for the comfort of the old, and as age and childhood often meet, the pleasure of the toddler as well, who could not reach up to a chair.

The pipe of the Patroon or his sons, corresponded in size with his broad acres, suggesting that the founders of early clay kilns might have had the Dutchman's taste in mind. Surely an evening's smoke in those days would remind one of a modern chimney in active use. The muff and ample bonnet of the Patroon's wife were quite as pretentious. Since the skins of animals were plentiful, the fur used in a muff was not skimped. It is said that these winter comforts were large enough at times to hold a baby inside.

The old Dutch Van Rensselaer Bible owned by the descendants of the Alexander Hamilton Van Rensse-

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laer branch of the family, and published in 1744, is a heavy and ponderous volume, strengthened and ornamented by corners and clasps of openwork brass. In the front is an atlas of the world as it was known at that period. From time immemorial children have enjoyed the pictures in old Bibles, and this profusely illustrated copy must have made the lagging hours of Sunday afternoon pass quickly for many little Van Rensselaers, with its multitude of small square pictures of Bible scenes, portraying the elephant and goat, lambs and horses, oxen and giraffe standing about in friendly fashion with Adam and Eve, or Adam and Eve dressed in skins of animals, driven out of Eden by an angel with a fluted sword, while the snake, with head raised, looked saucily on.

The family Bible and the fire-place tiles in the Clavcrack houses, afforded the children much entertainment, and impressed Bible history on their youthful minds.

Beside the old carved chairs and the Bible, we have a picture of Colonel Henry I. Van Rensselaer's home at the old Manor House during the war and the early years after it, through the wonderfully preserved rel-

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ics of the family of Henry I. Van Rensselaer 2d.

On the old Manor walls among other pictures, hung exquisite paintings on glass, wrought in brilliant colors. Four actresses, three of whom were Mrs. Brooks, Lady Johnson, and Kitty Fisher looked down upon the gazer, with arch glances of coquetry, even the transparent shawls of some filmy material about their shoulders, showing the delicate tracery of scattered flowers.

In cupboards and closets was a wealth of china, the pearly blue tint, with deep blue and gold-starred border, twisted handles, and acorn-top pointing to their oriental origin, tall beer mugs decorated in the same fashion as my Lady's tea cups and little tea caddy, with two birds on a twig, surmounting a shield enclosing a spray of flowers.

There were great center and side platters, plates, punch bowls, and other dishes ornamented in the thorn and rose pattern, rose-wreathed English china, and blue Cantonware in large numbers. Old Imari dishes, Delft, and Wedgwood also found a place in this large collection. Surely the Ladies of the Lower Manor lacked no china with which to set forth their hospita-

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ble board, be their guests ever so numerous.

The silver service of these Van Rensselaer Manor Houses was also of the finest. Besides the more pretentious sets bearing the Van Rensselaer and Schuyler coats-of-arms, and even a piece or two dating back to Catherine Van Brugh, the wife of Hendrick, the first proprietor of the Lower Manor, there were dainty little pitchers and salt shakers with slender handles, and one tea-pot has a history familiar in the trials of housekeeping. After Colonel Johannes Van Rensselaer's death, his granddaughter Anna, who had taken her mother's place in her father, Colonel Henry I. Van Rensselaer's home, visited Crailo to look after affairs at the Manor House, and found the slaves down in the kitchen having a tea drinking, with a silver tea-pot on the coals. Left to themselves they were enjoying a social time, giving no thought to their master's possessions, since no master was near. The tea-pot was rescued and is still in existence. The teak-wood knife boxes and the gracefully shaped spoon urns also tell stories of the wealth of knives and spoons necessary for the large numbers who surrounded the Manor tables.

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Back to the home of Colonel Henry I. Van Rensselaer came the widowed children and the orphan grandchildren, as to the other Manor Houses. There were few homes, Manor or farm houses in those days, which did not shelter three generations, and often aunts, nieces, and cousins as well.

The beautiful china and silver did not always remain in china closets, and cupboards over the mantels each side of the chimney, or even on the old mahogany sideboard, but graced the Manor table, with its large family and many guests, and there were special occasions when the candles lighted up not only silver and glass and china, but also the heirloom table linen beneath them.

Carefully treasured in one of the Claverack homes was the large Adam and Eve table cloth, which had come down from Myndert Schuyler, who was born in 1672. It was before the days of exquisitely woven damask, and the artist had exerted his skill in producing a remarkable design. Two soldierly looking persons representing Adam and Eve, stood on either side of a tree laden with apples, and one's imagination was required to do the rest in adjusting the scene to the

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personalities of our first progenitors in the Garden of Eden.

It was to a home such as this that Catherine Schuyler and her husband came when she visited her brothers at Claverack, or when the brothers and sister visited together at their father's house at Greenbush, where open house was kept, and princely entertainments were given. Washington and Lafayette and many other noted men of the day were guests of honor in this hospitable home. We can see the fair women of the family in their brocades and laces moving about these candle-lighted rooms, and the men in their flowered waistcoats and short clothes, buckles at knees, and shoes, and many times in officer's uniform, for out of the eighteen males in the Van Rensselaer family of the Upper and Lower Manors, fourteen served in the army during the war, most of them holding commissions, the children and old men only being excepted.

Their talk was of war and statecraft, of tenant troubles, and the rising men of the day, of the prospects for their children, and their hopes for the nation, of the cultivation of rare varieties of fruits and of crops, while the ladies left to themselves found a hundred

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topics of home, and family interest, the education and marriages of their children, and the fashions of the day,—over which to carry on an eager conversation. The Schuyler boys and girls often came down to Claverack, and the mothers rehearsed the doings of their respective children, Catherine Schuyler telling after the war was over, of the entertainment of General Burgoyne and his suite, who were so numerous that she had been obliged to order beds made upon the floor of the General's room, and how one of her younger boys, running about, opened the door in the morning, and called in, "You are all my prisoners," to the chagrin of his mother.

Nor was all the visiting one way. To be sure Catherine Schuyler's daughters did not afford the Van Rensselaer family many weddings to attend, since four of them took their marriages into their own hands but there were other festal occasions, and when Alexander Hamilton and Betsey Schuyler were married, there was a great wedding in the Schuyler mansion at Albany, and the Claverack relatives were a part of the joyous occasion.

Not since her mother's marriage at Crailo had there

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been so grand and joyous a family gathering, for the families of the Patroons gathered mightily on less festal occasions. When the Lord of the Manor died, his relatives from far and near, and most of his tenants attended the funeral, and not only a religious service was the order of the day, but also the attempt to entertain the great concourse of people. Every slave on the estate, and every helper of any sort, was called out to meet the needs of the great number of guests gathered to do honor to the Lord of the Manor. In a way the Patroon was a sovereign over his wide domain, and always had a representative in the Assembly, and in this Republican country was more remarkable than in the older civilizations. Small wonder that, as Mrs. Lamb says, "Whenever it was announced in New York that the Patroon was coming to the city by land, the day he was expected crowds would turn out to see him drive through Broadway with his coach and four with possillions behind, as if he were a prince of the blood."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SCHUYLER ROMANCES.

Catharine Schuyler had been the oldest girl and youngest child in Colonel Johannes Van Rensselaer's family, and as such was greatly beloved by her brothers, who viewed her life with pride and affection. Crailo, at Greenbush, was the half way house, where the Albany and Claverack families assembled, the Van Rensselaer and Schuyler grandchildren often meeting under their grandfather's roof. A young British officer seated on the curbing of the old well at Crailo wrote the words of Yankee Doodle. In the same place many a Van Rensselaer boy and girl sang them. As Colonel Johannes had a summer home at Claverack, Catherine Van Rensselaer in her girlhood, was accustomed to the close proximity to Albany of her Greenbush home, and also the familiarity of the Claverack home, in a community of Manor Houses occupied by her older brothers and their families.

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Lossing describes her as "delicate but perfect in form and feature; of medium height, extremely graceful in her movements, and winning in her deportment; well educated in comparison with others, of sprightly temperament and possessed of great firmness of will." The early years of her married life had been most eventful. With her soldier husband continually going and coming, and in constant danger abroad, her little family of children increasing almost yearly at home, she found her hands filled with the cares of a large household, and many public calls as well. She had inherited many of her father's fine characteristics, and also his executive ability. Mrs. Ellet says of her, "At the head of a large family, her management was so perfect, that the regularity with which all went on, appeared spontaneous. Her life was devoted to the care of her children; yet her friendships were warm and constant, and she found time for dispensing charities to the poor. Many families in poverty remembered with gratitude the aid received from her, sometimes in the shape of a milch cow or other article of usefulness. She possessed great self control, and as the mistress of a household, her pru-

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dence was blended with unvarying kindness. Her chief pleasure was in diffusing happiness in her home."

The family Bible in this household never failed to record each added child, with its benedictory prayer in the father's handwriting. "Elizabeth, Born Aug. 9th, 1757, Lord do according to thy will with her."

"John Bradstreet Born July 20th, 1763, Do with him according to thy will O Lord. Be with him living or dying."

"Philip Jeremiah Born Jan. 20th, 1768. May the Lord grant that he grow up for the glory of God and his happiness."

After the defeat of Ticonderoga, Catherine Schuyler had turned her barn into a hospital, tearing up table-linen and sheets into bandages, while she and her nieces Catherine and Gertrude Schuyler, and the daughters of Mayor Cuyler, united in nursing the wounded soldiers, her slaves being utilized meanwhile in cooking for the barn full of men, in the improvised hospital.

During the year her husband had spent in Europe, Mrs. Schuyler had finished building the Schuyler mansion at Albany, possibly with General Bradstreet's ad-

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vice and assistance, though the women of that day showed quite remarkable architectural talent in the construction of their own homes. It was a large square house built of yellow brick, with thick walls suitable for defense, and with spacious halls sixty feet long, divided in the center by fan and side lights with their delicate tracery. There was the long drawing room with its handsomely carved colonial mantels, and its deep window seats, where many a youthful confidence was given and received, and where General Schuyler and his wife received guests of great political and social prominence.

Sometimes the Schuyler coach brought the boys of the family to Claverack, which event was hailed with joy by their cousins of whom there were boys in plenty, John R., Jacob Rutsen, Jeremiah, Henry and James in General Robert R. Van Rensselaer's family, and John H., Volkert, Jeremiah H. and Robert Henry, in Colonel Henry I. Van Rensselaer's household. There were a hundred pleasures of field and stream which kept the boys occupied and happy in each other's company. The Schuyler, as well as the Van Rensselaer boys, were wide awake children, full of pranks, and

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with their minds stored with the incidents and excitements of soldier life with which they had come in close contact in both Saratoga and Albany. Rensselaer Schuyler's visits to Claverack were reckoned doubly pleasant through the absence of a hated penalty which he was accustomed to pay for his mischief, which consisted in writing pages of William Smith's History of New York.

When Betsey and Peggy Schuyler's bright faces, in their flaring, flower-lined bonnets, looked out of the coach windows as it drove up to the Manor Houses of their uncles, a flutter of excitement ran through the girls of either household, for there were girls as well as boys at the Lower Manor. At General Robert Van Rensselaer's there were Alida, Catherine and Angelica. In Colonel Henry I. Van Rensselaer's home were Angelica, Anna, and Magdalene.

There were comparisons of gowns and needle-work, and fashions, walks in the garden between flower beds, and under the old trees, and candle-light talks at night while they brushed their hair before the mahogany dressing-tables with their glass-handled drawers, and mirrors which reflected fair girlish faces

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and bright eyes shining with the interest of the story they were telling. The histories continued in hushed whispers after the candles were snuffed out, and the pale rays of a new moon crept in at the windows, and the high-post, chintz-covered bedsteads cast dark shadows in the great bed rooms.

What more exciting tale of romance than each Schuyler girl brought in turn, as one after another of her four sisters conceived of some new form of entering into the marriage relation! In the case of Peggy's elopement, there was the double interest, since both Peggy and Stephen Van Rensselaer, the young Patroon of the Upper Manor, were cousins of the Claverack young people. Peggy's husband must have quieted greatly in his later years, for it is said of him that "the elder Stephen was very rich, very benevolent, and very hospitable, but no matter how distinguished a guest was beneath his roof, when nine o'clock came he took his flat silver candle-stick and went to bed."

But no tale of them all, produced such delicious thrills of excitement as the story of Cornelia, who had attended the wedding of Elizabeth Morton in New



COLONEL HENRY I. VAN RENSSELAER MANOR HOUSE

Built soon after the Revolutionary War.

Of late years the residence of Morris Miller.



THE "WIDOW MARY" LIVINGSTON MANOR HOUSE
Residence of John Bell and his Sister.

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Jersey, who had married Josiah Quincy of Boston. After the wedding the bride and groom had departed in a coach and four, accompanied part of the way by their bridesmaids and groomsmen. As in many other cases one wedding had bred another, and here Cornelia Schuyler had met the bride's brother, Washington Morton, noted as a young athlete, he having walked to Philadelphia on a wager, accompanied by admirers and sustainers on horseback and in carriages. Naturally he had been the popular man of the occasion, and he and Cornelia had been immediately attracted to one another.

But, alas! Cornelia's father was not pleased with the form of the young man's notoriety, and upon being approached upon the tender subject, refused his consent, the General even going so far as to see young Morton started on a sloop toward home.

But love's young dream was not to be so easily blighted, and Cornelia confided to her cousins that she and her father had had a stormy scene, but she had not given up her lover.

There had been some fears and tears in the waiting time, but at last a letter had reached her, and it was

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not long after, that waiting at her window one night, her heart beating like a trip-hammer, she had heard a low whistle, and saw in the shadows below two muffled figures. Opening the window softly, a coil of rope was thrown up, which she rapidly drew in and found at the end a rope ladder. It required only a few minutes to fasten it securely, then the girl, too excited to remember to be afraid, stepped swiftly down from the high second-story window to the ground.

No longer separated, the lovers drove to the river and crossed, a coach and pair meeting them on the opposite side. Across country they hastened for thirty miles to Stockbridge, to the home of Judge Theodore Sedgwick, an old friend of the Morton family, and not unknown to the reciter or listeners, for he had been connected on the Massachusetts side with the troublesome boundary questions, with which all Colonel Johannes' children and grandchildren were only too familiar. The Judge sent for a minister and the runaway couple were married. It was thought by those giving breathless attention to the exciting story, to have been the crowning episode of all the Schuyler romances, and it was many a night before the beat of

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horses' hoofs on the road, failed to bring to mind the escapade of their cousin Cornelia, and a wonderment whether a similar runaway match was taking place along the moonlit post-road in Claverack.

As for the uncles and aunts, the interest of the recital did not prevent cautions to their own young people, not to follow the example of their headstrong cousin, and some prophecies of the probable unfortunate results of such a course. But all signs failed in this, as in the other cases where the Schuyler girls' elopements were concerned, the marriage proving to be a happy one, and the young man becoming in time a rising young lawyer of New York.

Ann Eliza Bleecker was a poetess of that day much read by the young ladies of the Manors. In a collection of poems and letters published after her death, is one humorous epistle, written to her sister, chiding her for her long delay in answering her letters, which gives between the lines, some idea of the life of a young lady of fashion of the day.

"To Miss S—— T—— E——

"No, I can admit of no excuse. I have written three letters in folio to my Susan, and have received no answer. After various conjectures about the cause

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of so mortifying an omission, I have come to this conclusion, that you have commenced a very, very, fashionable lady—(you see my penetration)—and though I am not in possession of Joseph's divining cup, I can minutely describe how you passed the day when my last letter was handed you; we will suppose it your own journal.

"Saturday Morn. Feb. 12.

"Ten o'clock. Was disturbed in a very pleasant dream by Aunt V. W., who told me breakfast was ready, fell asleep and dreamed again about Mr. S.

"Eleven. Rose from bed: Dinah handed my shoes, washed the cream poultice from my arms, and unbuckled my curls; drank two dishes of hyson; could not eat anything.

"From twelve to two. Withdrew to my closet; perused the title page of *Pilgrim's Progress*; R——came in, and with an engaging address, presented me with a final billet-doux from Mr. S. and a monstrous big packet from sister B. Laid the packet aside; mused over the charming note until three o'clock. Could not read sister's letter, because I must dress, Major Arrogance, Colonel Bombast, and Tom Fustian being to dine with us; could not suit my colors; fretted—got the vapours; Dine, handing me the salts, let the vial fall and broke it; it was diamond cut crystal, a present from Mr. S. I flew up in a passion—it was enough to vex a saint—and boxed her ears soundly.

"Four. Dressed; Aunt asked me what sister had wrote. I told her she was well, and had wrote nothing in particular. Mem.—I slyly broke the seal to give a colour to my assertions.

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"Between four and five. Dined. Tom Fustian toasted the brightest eyes in the company—I reddened like crimson—was surprised to see M—— blush, and looking around saw P—— blush yet deeper than we. I wonder who he meant. Tom is called a lad of judgment. Mr. S. passed the window on horseback.

"Six. Visited at Miss——'s; a very formal company; uneasy in my stays—scalded my fingers, and stained my changeable by spilling a dish of tea; the ladies were exceedingly sorry for the accident, and Miss V. Z. observed that just such another mischance had befallen the widow R. three years before the war.

"From six till three in the morning. Danced with Mr. S.—thought he looked jealous—to punish him I coquetted with three or four pretty fellows, whispered Colonel Tinsel, who smiled and kissed my hand; in return I gave him a petulant blow on the shoulder. Mr. S. looked like a thunder gulf; then affected to be calm as a stoic; but in spite of philosophy turned as pale as Banquo's ghost. M—— seemed concerned, and asked what ailed him? I don't like M——; I wonder what charm makes everybody admire her; sure, if Mr. S. was civil to her it was enough, he need not be so very affectionate. I flew in a pet to a vacant parlour, and took out sister's letter to read; I labored through ten lines, contemplated the seal, chewed off three corners, and folding the remains elegantly, put it in my pocket. I suppose it was full of friendship and such like country stuff. However, sister writes out of a good heart to me, and I will answer it. Mr. S. and I were reconciled through the intercession of P——, whose lovely humanity everywhere commands es-

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teem. We passed the hours very agreeably. On my retiring, Dinah attended, and having no paper handy, I gave her sister's letter to put my hair in buckle, while I read some verses.

"Well, Susan, you see that in the Arctic wilds of America your secret actions are brought to light, so I hope you will pay more respect to this epistle.

"Mr. B—— begs me, at this very instant, to present his very humble regards to you, and has made three solemn bows to your ladyship before I could write a sentence. Polly S—— is here, and making sad execution among our beaus. We live here, a merry kind of a laughing, indolent life; we suffer no real evils, and are far from regretting the elegant amusements that attend a city life; all that I want, my sister, is your company. This constant repetition you must permit (without repining) in all my letters. I never walk in that angle of my garden where your flowers are planted, but I heave a sigh, as if it were a painted monument to your departed body. Can you never come to us? Tell my sweet cousins I love them all tenderly; recollect me with affection to Aunt V—— W——, and permit my Peg and Hannah to salute you.

"ANN ELIZA BLEECKER."

"Tomhanick, March 29, 1785.

"This day fourteen years ago, Susan, I was married; repent and take a husband."

CHAPTER XIX.

ANTI-RENT TROUBLES.

Troubles over the payment of rents to the Lords of the Manors, and later to their descendants, had existed for a full century before the final settlement of the matter. The disputed boundary line between New York and Massachusetts which had caused a border warfare among the inhabitants of the contested districts, was probably occasioned as much by the discontent of the Manor tenants, as by the controversy between the provinces.

The Government of New York claimed that its eastern line was the Connecticut River, on the basis that the Dutch actually possessed this river before any other European people knew of its existence, that they had a fort and garrison there, had traded with the Indians, and purchased of them nearly all the land for a hundred miles on both sides of the Connecticut. Massachusetts set up rival claims, setting the boundary lines

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of her possessions westward at least as far as the Hudson River, although she confessed that she "had for a long time neglected the settlement of the West Bounds; they lying very remote from Boston."

About the middle of the eighteenth century, tenants who had neglected to pay their rents until they had reached a considerable amount, became defiant, deciding in future to hold their lands as owners and no longer tenants, under authority to be secured from the government of Massachusetts Bay. This was the beginning of long hostilities between the provinces. During the controversy houses were burned, wheat was cut down and carried away in wagons, and acres of corn were destroyed. Acts of retaliation were committed by both parties. Secret surveys were made by New England men, and possession of land surveyed in this way, was taken by the construction of tree-fences.

Tenants refusing to leave farms after being ordered to go, found their crops harvested and carried away by their landlord and his assistants. Hundreds of trees were destroyed and crops ruined by the rioters, and arrests followed, both parties growing more and more

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bitter as the trouble continued.

There were threats to take the Lords of both the Livingston and Van Rensselaer Manors dead or alive. Organizations of military companies intended for protection against the Indians, were used in this tenant-warfare, representing tenants or landlord, according to the composition of the company, the Captains of the Anti-rent party holding their commissions from the Governor of Massachusetts, while Robert Livingston, Jr., and Dirck Ten Broeck held theirs from the Governor of New York. The disaffection begun on the Livingston Manor, but spread to that of the Van Rensselaers.

Robert Noble, a tenant of Rensselaerwick, held one of these Massachusetts commissions, and transformed his house into a kind of fort, with loop-holes for muskets, and garrisoned by about twenty men under his command, claiming to hold their land under the Boston government. Some of their neighbors were taken prisoners unlawfully by the company, and upon a visit from the Sheriff he too was made prisoner, and confined in the Sheffield jail. The rescuing party led by John and Henry Van Rensselaer found the Noble

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house deserted, and before their return a tenant named Riis, an Anti-rent sympathizer was killed upon the Livingston Manor.

For this event each party accused the other, one pleading self-defense, and the other unprovoked assault. Further arrests followed, and the bitterness became intense, particularly against the Lord of Livingston Manor, who in the end ejected many tenants who refused to pay rent. Serious riots ensued, resulting in several killed and wounded. Under Governor De Lancy's authority, a number of the rioters were arrested and held in prison for about two years, with the effect of quelling the Anti-rent disaffection for a considerable time, and the proprietors and Manors settled down to a peace long destroyed by the Anti-rent disturbances.

A partial settlement of the boundary line was made at this time, but it was not until the spring of 1773, that the partition line of the jurisdiction of the two States, was entirely established, which made the dividing line as nearly as possible, twenty miles from the Hudson River. The commission appointed to decide upon the matter was composed of John Watts, William Smith, and Robert R. Livingston on the part of

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New York, and John Hancock, Joseph Hawley, and William Brattle for Massachusetts. The agreement of the commissioners received the approval of the Governors of both States.

The settling of the Boundary line between the two States however, did not entirely do away with the tenant uprisings. Twice in the next thirty-five years the Anti-renters took the war path, repeating each time the lawless acts of arson, destruction of grain, and taking of human life.

The Revolutionary War for a time quieted the more turbulent spirits, though it was often suspected that the so-called Tories were at times those actuated by a desire for personal vengeance.

The Anti-rent feeling arose again strongly in 1790, not only in Columbia but in adjacent counties. The farmer-tenants on the Manors held that they and their ancestors had already paid in rents, far more than the worth of the land, even including the buildings and improvements which they themselves had made, that the system of perpetual lease-holding was degrading and inconsistent with the principles of Republican government, or with self respect. On the banks of the

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Hudson river they were subjected to a system of land tenure which had been overthrown in England in the thirteenth century.

These opinions circulated freely through the press, awakened the old feeling of resentment, and being fanned to a white heat, some of the people of Noble-town (Hillsdale) threatened the deputy sent to hold an auction, by reason of an execution against a man named Arnold, and the auction was postponed till the following Saturday. On that day Sheriff Cornelius Hogeboom attended the execution himself, and after waiting till late in the afternoon for the arrival of his deputy, the people in the meantime having become more and more excited, postponed the sale once more, and with his two companions started for home. Young Arnold, an Anti-rent leader, seeing the officers of the law about to depart, fired a pistol, at which a number of men dressed and painted like Indians, suddenly appeared and followed the Sheriff and his companions, firing as they advanced. Part of the bullets passed between the two men, but Sheriff Hogeboom refused to spur his horse, saying that he was "vested with the law, and they should never find him a coward."

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Soon after this the Indians dropped off, but young Arnold and a companion mounted one horse and caught up with the Sheriff, when one of them leveled his gun and lodged a bullet in the heart of Mr. Hogeboom. With the exclamation "I am a dead man," the Sheriff fell from his horse, and was carried into a house near by.

The feelings and sympathies of the whole community were deeply stirred by this atrocious murder. Though twelve men supposed to have been implicated in the proceedings were arrested, Jonathan Arnold was never captured. After a long trial held in Claverack in February 1792, those arrested were acquitted for lack of evidence.

The widow of Cornelius Hogeboom died wholly of grief three months later. Everything possible was done to quell the lawless spirit after this tragic event, and for nearly half a century no further Anti-rent troubles of any magnitude arose. But the spirit of Anti-rentism was only smouldering, and broke out again in 1840. Secret societies were formed extending through several counties, pledging themselves to protect tenants from arrest or eviction, and to guard their

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property from sale. As soon as a Sheriff came in sight, a band of men in calico dresses with faces painted as Indians, armed with pistols, tomahawks and guns, appeared on horse back and warned him away, threatening him if he proceeded to perform his duty. Again there was lawlessness and tragedy until the leaders "Big Thunder" and "Little Thunder" were arrested. Sheriff Henry C. Miller attempted to serve papers on the property of an Anti-renter, and was taken prisoner by "Big Thunder" and six other chiefs of his tribe, and his papers burned amidst the war-whoops of "Big Thunder's" followers and sympathizers. This event awakened the deepest indignation.

It was known that "Big Thunder" was to speak to the Van Rensselaer tenants in Smoky Hollow in the town of Claverack on a particular day. He was surrounded by a body-guard in costume, and in this spectacular setting addressed a large audience of Anti-rent partisans, and others interested in the subject. It was his most brilliant as well as his last speech, for during the excitement of the day, a young man named Rifenburg was shot and killed. It was said to have been an accident, but the authorities felt it was time

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to prevent more accidents of the same sort, and "Big Thunder" was arrested on the night of his greatest triumph. He made a desperate effort to escape but failed, and was lodged that night in the Hudson jail. So great was the excitement over the threats of his followers, who, a thousand strong, had sworn to rescue the prisoners and burn the city of Hudson, that guards were stationed at the jail, and Hudson was patrolled at night for a month, while other arrangements were made for defense. At the end of this time the danger was believed to be past. Without a leader, and as the result of frequent arrests, the Anti-rent rioters had again quieted down.

"Big Thunder" was tried and sentenced to life imprisonment in Clinton prison. "Little Thunder" was never brought to trial. There were no more attempts to resist the execution of the law in Columbia County, but in 1846 the Anti-rent party elected their governor (Young) and one of his first official acts was to pardon the Anti-rent convicts, including "Big Thunder." The final triumph of the Anti-renters came in 1852, when in the test case of De Peyster against Michael (De Peyster having purchased of Van Rensselaer interest

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in land), the court was unanimous in its decision in favor of the defendant. This case closed the Anti-rent controversy in favor of the Anti-renters, after a century of repeated bloodshed and riot, and since then "the entire soil of the Lower Van Rensselaer Manor has been held in fee simple by its occupants."

"In the war against Great Britain in 1812-1815 Columbia county furnished a large number of troops, though few of them saw active service under hostile fire." A military organization under Brigadier-General Samuel Ten Broeck existed prior to the war, and was still under his command at this time. Among the commands mentioned as composing the brigade, was that of a "regiment of infantry commanded by Major Robert T. Livingston, having attached to it the troop of cavalry commanded by Captain Walter T. Livingston, and a regiment of infantry under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Jacob Rutsen Van Rensselaer attached to which was a troop of horse, commanded by Captain Killian Hogeboom."

"The Light Infantry Battalion of Lieutenant-Colonel (afterwards promoted to Colonel and Brigadier-General) Jacob Rutsen Van Rensselaer, was ordered

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to the defense of the city of New York, September 1st, 1814, and remained on that duty during the whole term of service."

William A. Spencer, a son of Judge Ambrose Spencer, for many years a prominent resident of Columbia County, was a participant in the naval battle fought on Lake Champlain under Commodore McDonough, and was wounded in the fight. The young man made a name for himself for gallantry as a midshipman in the Commodore's fleet.

" 'Big Thunder's' trial was conducted by the late Judge Theodore Miller as District-Attorney, a grandson of Stephen Miller of Claverack. He was assisted by "Prince" John Van Buren, the son of Martin Van Buren, at that time the Attorney-General of the State. This was one of the most celebrated cases in the history of the country, taking place as it did, in a period of greater excitement than has ever existed in Columbia County."

CHAPTER XX.

THE NEW CITY OF HUDSON.

The Presidential Electors, by an act of the Legislature, met at Hudson from the year 1796-1813, after which the Electoral College met at Albany. In many ways the growing city of Hudson was superseding Claverack, but although Hudson offered certain advantages in affairs of importance, the notable housewives of Claverack, and mine host of the stage-house still held their own in matters of hospitality and comfort for the inner man. The Presidential Electors cast their votes in Hudson, but they rode over the turnpike to Claverack in order to dine at Gordon's tavern, noted at the time for a generous and satisfying hospitality.

It is noticeable also that the Presidential Electors of the succeeding seventeen years included Claverack names, and in some cases residents, John Bay, Robert Van Rensselaer, Peter Van Ness, Stephen Miller,

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John C. Hogeboom, together with Thomas and Robert Jenkins of Hudson, forming the Presidential Electors from this section until 1813.

In 1785 by the act of incorporation Hudson became a city, the third in the State. The city bounds extended from the line of the town of Livingston on the south, to Major Abraham's (Stockport) creek on the north, and Claverack creek on the east. By this act "Claverack Landing," no longer existed, but it was another quarter of a century before the old name ceased to swing from the sign on the steamboat docks. The same year Ezekiel Gilbert moved his law office from Claverack to Hudson, becoming Hudson's first lawyer, and as such, was of great service to the new city in its early days. He was Representative in Congress in 1795, and it was through his efforts that Hudson was made a port of entry.

Many of the "Proprietors" who settled Hudson, brought ships with them from Providence and Nantucket, and in 1786 twenty-five of the vessels on the river were owned in the newly settled town. In 1813 two hundred and six sloops were running to New York, many of them owned at Hudson.

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Ship-yards were soon opened, and as many as five large ships were often on the stocks in the five different yards at the same time. Launching days were holidays, when schools were dismissed, and the people from adjoining towns came in to witness the launching and christening of the "Lively Polly," "American Hero," "Ajax," or "Columbia." Booths were built and refreshments sold, principally card-gingerbread, the holiday dainty of that date. Crowds would wait patiently for hours for the eventful moment when the boat first trembled, then began to move slowly on the ways. As it touched the water, guns were fired, and cheers arose from the gathered citizens and guests.

In 1802 on the first day of March, two thousand eight hundred sleighs entered the city. A continuous line of teams often stood the full length of Front Street, extending into Main Street, while they waited to unload at the different freighting houses, and fifteen vessels bearing heavy freight were known to set sail upon the same day. The season of the year and condition of the country roads no doubt controlled the exports that left the Hudson wharves in such stupendous quantities. Beef, pork, shad, pickled

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herring, lumber, leather, and country produce generally, formed the outgoing cargo. Returning, there came a great variety of fruits from the West Indies, and rum, sugar, and molasses. Some ships sailed to Charleston, the Windward Islands, Brazil, and Mediterranean ports. Once during these years a ship arrived from Holland consigned to William Wall, reloaded with lumber and returned to the Dutch port. The Dutch people of Claverack and those at the "Landing" made the vessel frequent visits during its stay, delighted with a voyager from the fatherland, and a crew who could speak their own tongue.

Whale and seal fishery were both carried on to a considerable extent, bringing from Falkland, and other islands in the South Atlantic, large numbers of fur and hair seal skins, and quantities of sea elephant's oil, while the whale ships returned from the Pacific ocean with cargoes of sperm oil. When Tallyrand was traveling in America he stopped at Hudson, examining with keen interest the oil works of Thomas Jenkins, and the details of the manufacture of sperm candles.

In the closing years of the eighteenth century pro-

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gress of all kinds was in the air, the building of towns, establishment of educational institutions, great commercial traffic between our own and other lands, whisperings of scientific feats to come, and like a leaf of the tree of progress, a yellow slip of paper dated 1799 floats down through the years, a receipt for a contribution made by Rev. John G. Gebhard "to promote the progress of the useful arts." This contribution was made in conformity to an act of Congress dated 1793, and suggests that advance along all lines was the order of the day.

In 1792 Claverack and Hudson united in paying honor to John Jay who had been making a visit to Kinderhook. A company of two hundred Hudson men met him at Claverack, where they were received by Mr. William H. Ludlow, who hospitably entertained his guest of honor and the visiting citizens from Hudson, while at his home. Mr. Jay was escorted to Hudson, where he was met by a salute from Frothingham's Artillery, and after a procession through the principal streets was taken to Kellogg's tavern upon the present site of "The Worth." This tavern was the stopping place for the stages, and

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swung out a patriotic sign of George Washington in full uniform on horseback. Here a bountiful entertainment had been provided, the Mayor of that date, Seth Jenkins, presiding. Toasts were drunk to the "Prosperity of Hudson" and to the "Man of the Day" to which the Mayor and Mr. Jay responded respectively. A reception of citizens was held during the evening, and the following morning the distinguished guest set sail on the sloop Pompey, for the home of Governor Lewis, amid the enthusiastic demonstrations of the citizens of Hudson.

The river was closed to navigation in December 1799, and the sad tidings of the death of General Washington were sent by post-riders to Albany. By this means of communication the event was not announced in that city till nine days after it occurred. Claverack and Hudson, owing to the shorter distance, heard of the sorrowful occurrence a day or two earlier.

Grief was widespread in hamlet and village, and in the Manor Houses on the Hudson, as well as in the cities. In Albany, by order of the Common Council, the bells tolled from three to five hours, and aldermen wore crape on their arms for six weeks. But far

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deeper than any outward sign could indicate, was the sorrow of a people who felt their independence had been won through the leadership of the man who had just passed away, who had been their first President, and without whom it seemed for a time impossible to go on.

The break was keenly felt and deeply deplored, and then younger shoulders were placed under the heavy load of building a new nation, and life went on, but the "Father of His Country" has been more honored and appreciated through every year of the succeeding century.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE MARRIAGE OF ALEXANDER HAMIL- TON AND ELIZABETH SCHUYLER.

The Schuyler girls, with their thoughts on matrimony, owing to the epidemic of marriages in their family, found in Claverack much to interest them in the stories of the weddings of an earlier generation, the marriage outfits of their Aunt Rachel Douw, the wife of Colonel Henry I. Van Rensselaer, and their Aunt Cornelia Rutsen, General Robert's wife, and also that of Anna Schuyler, wife of Johannes De Peyster, and daughter of that Myndert Schuyler through whom descended the Adam and Eve table-cloth. There were towels, sheets, pillow cases, hemsheets, handkerchiefs, neckerchiefs, and table cloths in large numbers, beside spreads and quilts, in the outfits of these Manor brides, which practical household furnishings were expected to cover the necessities of large families and many guests.

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Beside these, was the wedding finery, delicate yellow and blue satins and brocades, flowered silks and fine laces, and even their uncle Henry's wedding waistcoat drew a few moments attention from the merry-hearted girls, till exquisite pearl handled fans with groups of dancing maidens, drew their interest back to articles of feminine adornment once more.

It was before Peggy Schuyler was married and before the war was over, that Angelica Church came home with her first baby. She had taken a dangerous time for her visit to her old home, for an attempt was made by the Tories and Indians during her stay to capture her father. Other efforts of the kind had been made, and the house was guarded by six soldiers. Their guns were stacked in the hall. Childlike, the little Philip had hung about the dangerous playthings, and no peril seeming imminent, his mother had removed the guns to a safer place out of the baby's reach. At the alarm of the approaching enemy, the soldiers rushed for their weapons only to find them gone. The family fled precipitantly up stairs, when the baby was suddenly remembered to have been asleep in one of the rooms below. Margaret Schuyler dashed back,

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grasped the sleeping child in her arms, and shielding it with her body, gained the stairs, when an Indian flung a tomahawk at her head. It missed its aim, but buried itself in the wood of the stairs, where the mark is still visible.

The Van Rensselaer girls might listen with thrills of excited pleasure in the moonlight, to tales of the elopements of their Schuyler cousins, but Margaret's brave act in saving the life of her little nephew, won the generous admiration of her boy cousins.

Full of interest as were these stories of hair-breadth escapes, and runaway matches, to all the Van Rensselaer young people, the gathering of the clans of the Upper and Lower Manors of Rensselaerwick, in the great Schuyler drawing room, when Alexander Hamilton married Elizabeth Schuyler in her own home, was an occasion of family pleasure without alloy.

The deep window-seats had seen much of the love-making of the young diplomat and this daughter of the Schuylers, and offered inviting shadows to the many young people present. It was a grand occasion, drawing together those prominent in the social and po-

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litical life of the new Republic, for a large portion of which guests, it was not necessary to go outside of the family relationship. The rich brocades and glistening satin gowns, and dainty high-heeled slippers to match, the coquettish young eyes peering over the tops of ivory handled fans, as they bowed and courtesied in the minuet or money-musk, in the spacious upper hall which was used as a dancing hall in the Schuyler mansion, charmed the young scions of the different branches of the Van Rensselaer and Schuyler families, and their friends the young bloods of the day who were present.

Never had Betsey Schuyler's dark eyes shone so gloriously, or her cheeks flushed more bewitchingly, than when she stood beside her brilliant young husband, receiving the good wishes of her friends,—merry wishes from the cousins and younger people, more earnest ones from the older relatives. It was possible for all the guests to gather in the broad halls below, divided by a glass partition with fan and side lights.

The sweep of the staircase, with its fine spindled balustrade, seemed made for the descent of so distinguished a groom, and so charming a bride. There

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was a glance of pride and protection in Hamilton's fine face as he appeared on the half-way landing beside Elizabeth Schuyler gowned in the quaint and charming fashion of the period, with a witching smile on her always sunny face. As they descended into the merry waiting gathering below, they made a beautiful picture in the old hall, not easily forgotten among the many scenes of note which transpired there.

Catherine Schuyler's children were scattering, and grandchildren drew her heart in many directions, but still back to old Claverack among the rest. Philip Jeremiah, one of the younger among the Schuyler children, who had often visited and loved the home of his mother's girlhood, married Sally Rutsen a few years later, a relative of his aunt, Mrs. Robert R. Van Rensselaer, and when a son, Philip, named for both father and grandfather was born in April 1789, the young couple waited for the beautiful month of May, when the youthful Philip was baptized in the old Claverack church by Dominie Gebhard, the parents themselves acting as god-father and god-mother on this occasion.

Bringing back the children of the new generation

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to the old Claverack homes had many pleasant features. There are no toys in childhood equal to the quaint playthings of by-gone days, and in the Van Rensselaer homes of Claverack were wooden cradles with hooded canopies at one end, and little goose feather beds and home-woven covers, and high-post doll's bedsteads with blue and white chintz curtains. The dolls that looked out between the curtains, were most attractive, if we may trust a family saying of the Dominie's daughter, Charlotte. "As beautiful as a Holland doll," was her highest form of praise of a child, telling one how beautiful the children's Dutch dolls must have seemed to their youthful eyes. Tiny leather trunks, brass-nailed and hairy, held the doll's wardrobe, while little rush-bottomed rocking chairs invited the small mothers to rest awhile and rock their doll-babies.

For the boys, the old flint-lock guns, and spy-glasses, the pleasures of Claverack creek and a fishing rod, and the remnants of Revolutionary uniforms never lost their fascination, nor yet the Spitzenberg apples to be found on the top of the "kas" in many of the houses. The hollow tops of these old linen chests

AN ALBANY WEDDING.

afforded a safe hiding place for the spicy winter apples during the mellowing time, until the lengthening of boyish legs revealed their presence to the eyes on a level with the edge of the "kas," when the climber felt as rich as though he had discovered a gold mine.

CHAPTER XXII.

ROBERT FULTON AND THE FIRST STEAMBOAT.

To a man as full of mechanical genius as Dominie Gebhard, and to sons growing up with the same tastes, the stories of a forth-coming boat on the Hudson run by steam, could not but produce eager expectation and intelligent interest. The fact that this new venture was the combined effort of Chancellor Livingston and Robert Fulton, made it doubly attractive to the section of country which Chancellor Livingston called home. The subject was under discussion at every stage-house and tavern, and the skippers of the sloops on the Hudson, looked forward with ill-concealed disdain to the attempt to run a boat irrespective of wind or tide, and they, in common with those who looked on at its building, joined in calling the new steamboat "Fulton's Folly."

Fulton, as he says himself, "accomplished his great

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purpose without a single word of encouragement, or of bright hope, or a warm wish crossing his path." Yet had he but known it, there were men of vision holding a hope of success in their hearts for the young inventor and his project, and bearing in their turn the ridicule of the doubters. But the great discoveries of science have never waited for the demise of the incredulous before pouring their benefits upon mankind, and neither did the new steamboat "Clermont," named for Chancellor Livingston's place on the Hudson, await that long delayed day.

On the 17th of August, 1807, the Clermont started on its first trip up the Hudson, carrying a party of invited guests. All along the river crowds gathered on the wharves and along the shores waving and cheering, and the skippers and sailors on the sloops and river craft watched with astonishment the grotesque-looking vessel moving rapidly forward against wind and tide, without the usual means of locomotion. And indeed it was an awe-inspiring sight, especially at night. From the smoke-stack arose a volume of fire-streaked smoke, made still more luminous with flying sparks when the wood fires were stirred from below.

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The noise of paddles and machinery was deafening at a near range, and some of the foreign sailors on the sloops are said to have dropped to their knees with a prayer that they might be protected from so horrible a monster, which came swiftly on its way, belching fire and smoke.

A farmer part way up river hastened home to inform his family that "he had seen the devil going up river in a saw-mill." No doubt the ludicrous appearance of the oddly-formed vessel awakened humorous remarks as well as astonishment, nevertheless the power of the little steam engine, caused the Clermont to overtake sloops and schooners beating to windward, and leave them far behind in the race.

The invitations for this first trip of the Clermont, had in some cases been accepted with a degree of hesitancy, for the voyage was an experiment, yet there was a sense of fascination in the untried experience. There were several ladies on board, among them Miss Harriet Livingston, daughter of Walter Livingston of "Teviotdale" in the Livingston Manor, and several of her cousins. The Manor families were also represented by John R. Livingston and John Swift Liv-

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ingston, beside the Chancellor. As the voyage proceeded, apprehension was disarmed by the successful passage of the boat through the water, and the relief from previous doubt showed itself in merriment and song.

"Ye banks and braes o' bonny Doon," being Fulton's favorite song, was sung by the young people in the stern, in compliment to the man who had made this great effort and won this great success.

Just before the boat reached Clermont, Chancellor Livingston made two memorable announcements, one in the form of a prophecy, "that the name of the inventor would descend to posterity as a benefactor of the world," the other of special interest to all present, which was the betrothal of Robert Fulton to his young relative Harriet Livingston.

While the boat lay at the Clermont dock on the night of August 18th, Captain Brink, who was in command, rowed across the river to Saugerties for his wife, whom he had promised to "take to Albany in a boat driven by a tea-kettle."

The youngest passenger on the Clermont that August day was Mr. Daniel Gantley, afterward of Ath-

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ens, N. Y., who lived to be nearly ninety-four years old, and never forgot the peculiar sensations of danger and elation experienced by this novel form of locomotion, nor the amazement the steamboat occasioned along the path of its progress.

It is a noteworthy fact, that in the Hudson-Fulton Celebration just passed, John Sanderson Elliott, great-grandson of Daniel Gantley, a High School boy of Catskill, made the address of the occasion, speaking of the great achievements of both Hudson and Fulton, and closed by introducing Governor Hughes to the assembled people.

The boat left New York at one o'clock on Monday, and arrived at Clermont at one o'clock on Tuesday, steaming over one hundred and ten miles in twenty-four hours. She left the Chancellor's dock again at nine o'clock the next morning, and arrived at Albany at five in the afternoon, having made the one hundred and fifty miles in thirty-two hours. On her trial trip the Clermont passed up river through the Athens channel, but on her return, pleased the citizens of Hudson by steaming down the Hudson channel, the return trip settling any lingering doubts as to the future

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success of steam-navigation.

On the 4th of September the Clermont made her first trip as a passenger boat. Every house-top and wharf in New York which commanded a view of the water, was filled with people eager to gain a sight of the wonderful invention, meanwhile warning their friends not to go aboard so dangerous a vessel. The boat made a circle three times. By this time incredulity had given place to surprise, and as the steamboat moved toward the north, ten thousand people cheered vociferously. Fulton stood with flashing eyes erect on the deck. It was a moment of supreme victory, worth years of effort. At Tarrytown they left a passenger, and again at Newburgh, each town giving the boat and party aboard an ovation. At West Point the whole garrison turned out and cheered. It was a voyage of triumph.

As the Clermont passed Catskill, on a little island in the river called Bompie's Hook, (now Catskill Point) the passengers saw six boys eagerly watching the approach of the steamboat. One of these boys was Thurlow Weed, in later years the celebrated politician. Catskill mainland not being connected with the

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Point in those days, the boys had made a connection for themselves, by stuffing their clothes in their hats and placing the hats on logs pushed ahead of them as they swam toward Bompies. When the first streak of smoke appeared on the horizon the boys were ready for their sight of the first steamboat.

The residents of Claverack and the citizens of Hudson watched the vessel steam toward Albany even more keenly alive to its value in navigation than their neighbors further south, for Hudson was a port of entry, and steam would reconstruct her chief industry. A good sloop made the journey from Albany to New York in forty-eight hours. The new steamboat had been able to cut off eighteen hours from this lengthy voyage on its return trip.

The Clermont continued to make trips till the close of navigation of that year, making Poughkeepsie, Esopus, and Hudson stopping places. Shortly after her first voyage she made a record-breaking trip from New York in twenty-seven hours, landing at Hudson with one hundred and twenty passengers.

One of the resultant benefits of such rapid navigation was made public about this time through a unique

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advertisement in the Hudson Bee.

"Here's Your Beauties of Lobsters."

"These, with sea bass, cod and black fish, jumping and alive in Hudson market, afford quite a dainty to an epicure, one hundred and twenty miles from the ocean. They are brought here on the steamboat, and sold in the brick market, fresh and in good order, every time she arrives from New York."

A year later the following curious explanatory note was added to the advertised time-table.

"As the time at which the Boat may arrive at the different places above mentioned, may vary an hour, more or less, according to the advantage or disadvantage of wind or tide, those who wish to come on board will see the necessity of being on the spot an hour before the time."

Going north the boat stopped at West Point at four o'clock in the morning. Returning, a landing was made at Poughkeepsie at midnight, and at Newburgh the same hour as at West Point. The night-watches spent on the docks while waiting for the new steamboat, must have given would-be passengers excellent opportunities to study the stars at various hours of the night.

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During the winter the gallant little Clermont was placed on the ways in the bay south of Tivoli (then called Lower Red Hook), where she was rebuilt and re-modeled by ship-carpenters from Hudson. Her size being much increased, she offered accommodations to a larger traveling public. May 1st, 1808, she was re-launched and re-christened the "North River," and in charge of Captain Samuel Jenkins of Hudson, was taken to New York, and at the dock at the foot of Dey St. the carpenter and cabin work was completed. Also at this time the machinery was put on board, but proving inadequate to the strain put upon it, in a few weeks the boat was supplied with a boiler of heavy sheet copper. "Commodore" Wiswall was now in command, and once more Chancellor Livingston and a party of friends made a trial trip, this time on the "North River."

Livingston had made unsuccessful efforts toward steam navigation before he met Fulton in Paris. Fulton in his turn, had failed to secure the requisite amount of political and financial support in his experiments to insure success, but the combined efforts of the two men, gave to the world of their day, one of

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the wonder-working results of applied science. In 1810 the steamboat "North River" made her record trip from New York to Albany in nineteen hours, and a century later the world is still reaping the benefits accorded it by two courageous and inventive minds.

While Fulton's success was at its height he married Harriet Livingston, grand-daughter of the last Lord of Livingston Manor, whose engagement had been announced on the first trip of the Clermont. She was a beautiful and accomplished woman with a charm beyond others to a man of inventive genius. Her belief in his talents and ability are said to have amounted almost to a passion. Their married life was an exceedingly happy one, their union being blessed with four children, a son and three daughters. Fulton's love for art had continued in conjunction with other engrossing pursuits. His painting of his friend Joel Barlow and the illustrations of Barlow's Columbiad, had been the result of his warm friendship, and his love for the artistic.

An odd conceit was the painting of his wife's mother, Mrs. Walter Livingston, on one side of a panel, and her grandson, little Robert Barlow Fulton, on the

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Beautiful as was this home life, it was destined to be short-lived. Robert Fulton died on February 24th, 1815, at the age of fifty years. In him was lost an ingenious and notable inventor, and a beneficent spirit, whose future efforts might have blessed the world still further, had he been given length of days in companionship with a wife fitted to inspire and encourage the talents of his fertile brain.

After her husband's death Mrs. Fulton lived for a time in New York, then brought her children home to her father's house at "Teviotdale," where she died herself a few years later.

The body of Robert Fulton's wife and the mother of his children rests to-day under the century-old trees in Claverack cemetery, while in the sweeping view to the west from this quiet spot, the Catskills guard the river as of yore, running like a ribbon of glistening blue at their feet, where the steamboats never cease their tireless journeys north and south, and Fulton's name and fame are honored by thousands of summer pilgrims from every land. His name will ever be interwoven for the American people, and for the voyagers from across the sea, with the exquisite beauty of the

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Hudson, and "lest we forget" the Hudson Day Line has named its last and most beautiful floating palace after the inventor of the steamboat, and hung his portrait painted by his grandson Robert Fulton Ludlow, where all may see.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE LEGEND OF "SPOOK ROCK."

It might be inferred, that with the city of Hudson peopled by New Englanders, the Dutch Dominie of the Claverack parsonage would have little connection with the town, outside of the interest aroused by so great progress and commercial activity on the site that had once been Claverack Landing, but as in other cases, the new roads from Hudson led to the parsonage door.

In the earlier years of the "Proprietors'" settlement, the Friends' Meeting Houses were the only places of worship in Hudson. When that time had passed, the road to Claverack had become familiar, and perhaps for the brides and grooms traveling toward the marriage altar, there was a trace of romance in riding along the beautiful banks of Claverack Creek, when the road on either side was lined with trees and bushes white with spring blossoms, or in June when butter-

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cups and daisies sprung up in their pathway, and wild roses turned their delicate petals to the summer sun, or yet later on, when the forest trees were festooned with wild grapevines hanging lush with their heavy purple fruit.

From the time of the settlement of Hudson, the names in the Claverack marriage records were no longer entirely High and Low-Dutch, but Silver and Fairchild, King and Arnold, Pennyman and Hamilton, Skinner and Burck, Clark and Ray, Bingham and Hathaway, and others of New England birth took their places among the long lists of the hereditary names of the occupants of the Manors, and the Dutch burghers of the country side. It was a day also when marriages were often arranged irrespective of parental knowledge, and on the pages of the yellowing records of one hundred years ago, stand some names prominent in the public life of the time, whose youthful escapade in this direction, awakened great surprise when copied by their descendants.

In 1812 the parsonage family had greatly changed. Three sons, Jacob and Philip, who had come with their parents from New York, and John, who was born in

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Claverack, had all been admitted to the bar, and were living in Schoharie and Catskill. Philip having married Eleanor Demarest, of the Van Bergen family of Catskill, and John being also married, had families of their own. Charlotte, for many years the only daughter of the parsonage, had married William H. Davis, a merchant of Catskill, who had been aide-de-camp to Washington. John Gabriel and Lewis, younger sons, were attending the University of Pennsylvania, fitting themselves for the medical profession. About a year previous, a son, Charles, had died in his early manhood, and this first loss among their children had proved a great grief to his parents. At the date mentioned it would seem that only the baby Annamaria, who had now grown to be a girl of thirteen, was left to make sunshine in the rooms of the old parsonage, which had once been so full of children's voices and laughter.

Dominie Gebhard still occasionally preached in the Ghent church, though he no longer held regular services there at stated periods as in former days. Until some time in 1790 he seems to have had charge of this church. After that for a long period of years the little clapboarded sanctuary was dependent on occasional

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services held by the ministers of adjacent churches, till at length in 1822 it became a separate church, and called to its pastorate Rev. Peter S. Wyncoop who served the congregation for many years.

In the family Bible of John C. Hogeboom, whose first entries were made during Dominie Gebhard's charge of the Ghent church, and continued through many years, are the births of a large number of children and grandchildren.

"On the 5th day of July, 1789, my daughter Cynthia was born, on Sunday about two o'clock in the morning. (Peter Hogeboom my brother, and Ally Hogeboom, my sister Godfather and Godmother) was baptized by Mr. Gebhard," was one entry.

The death of the same Cynthia already mentioned, is recorded in 1813.. "Dec. 7th at about two o'clock in the afternoon my daughter Cynthia died of a distressing illness of many years, which she bore with Christian fortitude, anxiously awaiting her departure from this world of trouble and affliction."

The great care given to the hour of birth and death, grew from the prevalent belief that the hour of death would correspond with the hour of birth. Nearly every

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entry records some event or comment, which turns these early Bible records into a family history. One brief entry carries with it a touch of special grief, as one of the tragedies connected with the Anti-rent uprisings. It reads—

“My father, Cornelius Hogeboom, died the 22d day of October, 1791. He was killed in Nobletown, (Hillsdale) about three o'clock in the afternoon.”

Various proposals were made by Dominie Gebhard that the Claverack church be given an opportunity through the votes of its male members, to unite with the Classis of Rensselaer, but the opinion of the Consistory was for many years against it, and the church remained an independent organization until the time of Dominie Gebhard's English colleague, Rev. Richard Sluyter.

A direct method was employed to protect the church from debt. An entry in the church books under this head, reading “Resolved, that a magistrate call on those persons who do not pay their subscriptions.” When money promised was not paid, it was collected by suit if necessary.

In these years parents had begun to act as sponsors

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in some instances for their own children, and not only parsonage grandchildren were brought to the old church in Claverack for baptism, but also those of many of its earlier members. It is said that Dominie Gebhard, in a number of instances, baptized the great-grandchildren of those whom he had united in marriage.

In all the carefully kept records of this long pastorate, there is no official account of deaths or funerals, yet in the busy pastor's life these must have intersected the seasons of joy and thanksgiving, opening wide the gates of eternal life to the aged pilgrim and the youth cut off in his prime, as the new doors swung open for the entering generation. Could we but see the paths trodden by the faithful pastor's feet in these errands of consolation, stretching over these fifty years, they would make a network of golden sympathy winding and counter-winding into every lane and wagon-road and turnpike over his wide field of labor, ending with their tender ministrations at the door of Manor and farm house, leaving there the comforting words and heavenly promises, for this world and the world to come, of this devoted man of God.

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A direct method was employed from debt. An entry in the church head, reading "Resolved, that those persons who do not pay When money promised was not by suit if necessary.

In these years parents had



" SPOOK ROCK "
.. Which turns over every time it hears the Claverack Church bell toll ..

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For the rest, the multitude of white stones in God's acre which lies by the old church, bearing date of this half century, tell their own story, and are silent witnesses of the sorrows of the people, and the labors of consolation of their minister. Even the corner where the slaves are buried carries its own legend of those years when slavery was common in this section of the country, but when death came, these dependents were given a quiet resting place, and in some cases a stone was placed at the head of the grave, telling of the simple faithfulness and devotion of one of these dark-faced servants.

Once only is there a record on this subject. This entry states that "the church yard is to be furnished with lock and key, and for opening lock and breaking ground one dollar is to be paid, two shillings for ringing the bell."

As the custom of tolling the bell at the passing of a life, or the hour of burial, was in force in those days, it probably gave rise to a curious old legend, founded on a still earlier Indian legend, both of which are still told with interest along the banks of Claverack Creek. For many years the Begraft family were members of



" SPOOK ROCK "
.. Which turns over every time it hears the Claverack Church bell toll. "

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the Claverack congregation, and between Claverack and Hudson a rocky formation of lime and slate of some considerable extent still goes by the name of Becraft mountain, though the spelling is changed. Under its overhanging ledges grow a wealth of ferns and wild flowers, and between the mountain and the creek from time immemorial, there has been a wagon-road. At one of the most picturesque spots in the creek under the mountain, lies a great boulder, unmoved by spring freshets or winter storm, for it is not always summer under Becraft. The winter snows powder the evergreens and the young saplings that cling to its sides, and the ledges of grey rock stretch between the green and the white, defying heat and cold, while the creek at its base is a frozen sheet of ice, and a white blanket of snow covers alike the ferns, the wild flowers, and the wagon-road.

Long before the first white settler had discovered beautiful Claverack, a tribe of Mohican Indians had a village here called "Pot Koke." On more than one farm have their battle axes, arrow heads, and hammers been unearthed by the husbandman, while engaged in the peaceful occupation of tilling the soil.

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There is a tradition connected with the Chieftain's daughter, that would lead us to believe that the Indian colony was not only strong and numerous, but that its young squaws were also charming in the eyes of neighboring tribes. The Chief of the Mohicans had his wigwam on the summit of Becraft Mountain, a safe vantage ground in case of hostile attack, for the arrows of his followers aimed at an enemy skulking along the trail below, would have been fatal, while the Mohicans were quite able to defend themselves behind the mighty fastnesses of the slate rocks.

But the Chief had a daughter whose soft dark eyes and raven locks, and nut-brown skin were a bewitchment, and whose slender moccasined feet were swift upon the trail. Alas, that her lover was the son of an enemy who forgot the tribal hatred, when, hiding from tree to tree one day, he had worked his way to the top of Becraft in order to discover the weakness of the Mohican camp, and saw instead the graceful form of the Princess flitting between the wooded aisles at the top of the mountain. It was useless to plead with the Chief of the Mohicans, though the daughter made the effort, and equally useless to fight for the maid, for

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the tribe of the young brave was far outnumbered by that of the Princess' father. The lover's only hope was in strategy.

A swift runner brought her a tiny roll of birch-bark wrapped in a rabbit skin with a love message inside. She found it within the flap of her tent, and trembling donned her doe-skin robe, and waited till the night shut down, and the tribe slept, and only the glow of the camp fire was left, then sped over the trail, and down the rocks to the shadows of the overhanging cliffs. Among the ferns and lichens and wild flowers she met her lover. The night air swept their cheeks, and the music of the stars sung their happiness. The moments sped swiftly by.

A low rumble in the distance, a flash of light across their path, a moment's terror of discovery, and they drew close within the shadow of the overhanging rocks, shielded by bushes and young trees from the big drops of rain. The crash of the thunder rolled over their heads, the forked lightning played over the water and fields of maize, and they clung to each other in the midst of the tumult. Then quicker than thought, more sudden than fear, came a heavy crash, a blinding

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light, and the great boulder rolled into the stream, carrying the lovers with it.

It was all over in a few moments, the noise and commotion, the flash and the downpour. One by one the stars came out again, the young trees shook off the rain drops, moved by a gentle breeze, a whip-poor-will cried in the night, while the creek skirting the trail lay quiet in the starlight, and the overhanging rock had found a new resting place for all time in the winding stream, becoming a monument to two lovers, a son and a daughter of Indian Chiefs of alien tribes. This is the Indian legend of "Spook Rock," but for many a year the story that has been oftenest told as connected with this rock, is that it turns over every time it hears the Claverack church bell toll, and though the great rock has no ears to hear, or power to turn in the winding stream, if sound is carried to remote distances, affecting the formation of rocks and mountains, the impress of almost two centuries of the tolling funeral bells of Claverack must have left their mark, though unseen, on the hard and rugged sides of "Spook Rock."



**MRS. JOHN GABRIEL GEBHARD,
The Dominie's "Huis Vrouwe."
"Delineavit A. Phillips 1820."**

From an Oil Painting now owned by Rev. John G. Gebhard, D. D.

CHAPTER XXIV.

HIS "HUIS VROUWE."

In the old church records the name of the man who stood as sponsor in baptism came first, followed by the full maiden name of his wife with the added explanation "his vrouwe," with two exceptions. One of these was the wife of the Patroon, and the other was the minister's wife, which were written "his huis vrouwe."

This latter title was one of respect to the Ladies of the Manor and the parsonage. Though the worldly possessions differed in the two homes, they each called for marked executive ability, an almost boundless hospitality, a power of leadership and direction equal in many cases to that of their husbands, and an habitual life of culture and refinement which served as an example to all about them, and made them prominent in the social life of the country.

The Dominie's "huis vrouwe" was a notable house-keeper. Any departure from absolute cleanliness and

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neatness was abhorrent to her. Her quilting bars, with their edges of homespun, were worn into furrows through the extra peg-holes bored that more and more quilts might be rolled up tightly, making the quilting a work of art in its exquisite neatness. The wonderful white counterpane on her guest-room bed, with its thousands of fine stitches, etching the smooth surface into a beautiful design, with its artistic center and border of roses, and deer in all four corners, attested to her skill with a needle. No linen after the spinning and weaving, was whiter than that directed in the bleaching, by the Dominie's wife on the parsonage lawn.

Each spring the tailoress went from house to house, cutting and fitting clothing for the boys and men from the pepper and salt cloth made from the wool of their own sheep. Seven boys were always waiting for new suits at the parsonage, with the proclivity of boyhood to wear holes in elbows and knees. The tailoress was followed by the shoemaker, and dyeing was also a part of the home work. The parsonage, in common with the farm houses, had a cool lean-to for the making of butter, while the cooking for such a family was a daily

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burden. Olekoeks, liverwurst, rollejes, bolletjes, pan-lash,—to the Philadelphia woman all these articles of food were familiar before she came to reside in the Lower Manor of Claverack, and she delighted in keeping the old home atmosphere in this northern parsonage.

There were two days in the year that the children dearly loved. One was New Year's when St. Nicholas and his vrouwe always remembered good children, upon the eve of which they stood in a row before the great roaring fires, and hand in hand sung,—

“Santa Klaus, goedt heilig man,
Knoppebest van Amsterdam,
Van Amsterdam aan Spanje,
Van Spanje aan Orange,
Een brang deze kindjes eenige graps.”

The translation of which is—

“Santa Claus, good holy man,
Go your way from Amsterdam,
From Amsterdam to Spain,
From Spain to Orange,
And bring these little children toys.”

Some of the gifts on the following morning took the form of seed-cakes, representing almost every animal on the farm. At a later date, after the keeping of

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Christmas had become a custom, there were children who descended from these old Dutch families, who found themselves rich in two gift-giving days only a week apart, and the seed-cakes still continued to celebrate New Year's day.

The second of these happy festival days was Paas or Easter. Every boy and girl watched the hens' nests with jealous eyes as Paas approached, for the great attraction of this day was a special kind of Paas-cakes, of which the children were very fond. They were made of eggs and flour alone, beaten very light, often in a mixing bowl made from the knot of a tree, which bowls withstood the wear of time and much beating. The batter was expected to entirely cover the long-handled spider or pan-cake shovel. The making and baking of these cakes was a special feat of the slaves in most of the households. When the cake was browned on one side, the pan was shaken dexterously and with a quick move of the long handle, and a toss of the spider, was thrown into the air, and turning came down on the opposite side. There was a great rivalry among the colored people as to which could throw the Paas-cakes the highest and still successfully

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catch them. The children of the families surrounded the great open fire places on these occasions, holding their breath with excitement and expectation, and the safe return of the Paas-cake to the spider was the signal for cheers and exclamations of delight.

In the competition over tossing the cakes, the stories reached large proportions, it having been told on good authority that one Paas-cake had been seen going out of the top of a chimney only to turn in the air, and descend through the chimney's wide mouth on its right side in the spider. Nan, the slave-woman at the parsonage, was a past-master with Paas cakes, both at tossing them, and piling them up with melted butter and sugar between, till she had a great platter full, when she would cut them down in many triangles ready for the Paas breakfast of the Gebhard children.

Trained nurses were unheard of in 1776 or for many a decade afterward, but the Dominie's wife knew all who were sick in the congregation and just what might be done to help them. She had the firm capable hands of the born nurse, and there were few houses in the congregation who had not known the sense of relief which flowed through tired bodies, when the Domi-

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nie's wife came to nurse, or "sit up" with those who were ill. There were troubles not easy to carry to the minister, but with the minister's wife it was different. The mothers in the congregation knew that in her they were sure to find sympathy, courage, and strength. It was not strange that the congregation adopted the custom of calling her "Mère."

With all the fullness and happiness of her Claverack life, she never forgot the home of her girlhood, and she was able to imbue her children with a similar affection. All of her sons who married except one, took to themselves Philadelphia wives, from among the descendants of the early settlers of Pennsylvania, and it grew to be a familiar saying in the family, that Philadelphia was a good place for wives. Hon. John Gebhard of Schoharie, married his cousin, Mary Seitz. Dr. Lewis Gebhard married Mary Ann Halberstadt and settled in Philadelphia, while Dr. John Gabriel Gebhard, after some years of medical practice in Troy, brought his wife, Elizabeth Snyder home to Claverack.

It was a great pleasure to the old lady of the parsonage to have her Philadelphia daughter-in-law bring

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with her, as a part of her wedding outfit, beautiful damask table-linen, the first imported to this country, by her father, John Snyder, and Stephen Girard. There were a hundred subjects to talk over of past and present interest. Philanthropy had an early birth in the Quaker city, and Elizabeth Snyder's mother had been among the first ladies interested in the Blind Asylum and other charities.

Old-fashioned neighborliness and city philanthropy are not far apart at their root, and it would have given the capable old Dominie's wife a thrill of pleasure to have seen her daughter-in-law at a later date, wrap a great unbaked batch of bread in a warm blanket, and drive with it over several miles to a suffering neighbor's, where she nursed the sick and baked her bread, sending it back to her family at night. Elizabeth Snyder's grandfather had been an elder in Dominie Gebhard's church in Worcester, making a tie with the old gentleman also.

Sometimes the family coach drove down from Schoharie with the cousin-wife, and at other times Philip and his wife, and Charlotte and her husband drove up from Catskill, and for them all the mother had a warm

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and hospitable welcome. Life was full in the old parsonage.

CHAPTER XXV.

CALLING AN ENGLISH COLLEAGUE.

Many changes had gone over the wide reach of Dominie Gebhard's pastorate since the beginning of his ministerial service in Claverack, not the least of which had been the slow but sure alteration in the prevailing language. At the start it had been necessary for him to become proficient in a tongue not his own, and at least partially unfamiliar, that he might preach acceptably to his people, the majority of whom were of Low-Dutch or Holland origin.

At the end of forty years, the Dutch language was falling into disuse, except among the older portion of the congregation, who were still strongly attached to their mother tongue. The influence of Washington Seminary in their midst, which had trained a generation of English-speaking men and women, the close contact with the Nantucket settlers of Hudson, as well as the going and coming of the citizens of the

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large cities, where English had in a great measure superseded other languages, had all borne their part in effecting a change more perceptible each year. It was apparent that the younger part of the congregation had become Americanized, and was beginning to feel impatient of a language almost obsolete, and which they only partially understood.

That Dominie Gebhard, long the shepherd of this flock, understood and co-operated in the desire of the younger members for a colleague who could preach and perform his pastoral duties in English, is apparent from a letter written by him as the President of Consistory, to the Rev. Richard Sluyter, inviting him to preach in the church of Claverack in September, 1815, to which he added this sentence, "It may be an advantage to you finally."

It was also at this time that the church of Claverack came under the care of the Classis of Rensselaer and the Synod of the Reformed Dutch Church, having existed previous to this date as an independent body. Quoting again from a letter from Dominie Gebhard to Mr. Sluyter, "All efforts which have hitherto been made to bring this congregation under the Clas-

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sis have proved abortive; but this is the first and most favorable opportunity to effect that purpose. The present Consistory are not averse to it. I am confident that the high opinion which the whole congregation entertains of your person and talents, will readily overcome the caprice of a few individuals. This circumstance is another argument in our behalf, to give our call a favorable consideration, and finally to accept it. You alone will then be entitled to the merit of having brought this congregation under the Classis. May the Lord incline your heart to see the necessity of bestowing your labors in this vineyard among us."

The call was finally accepted by Mr. Sluyter, with the stipulation that he should preach "three-fourths of the Sabbaths of each and every year in the Reformed Dutch Church of Claverack," and that the other "fourth of the Sabbaths" be given to Hillsdale, which united in the call, and later another "fourth" was given to the church of Ghent. About this time it was estimated that Claverack alone numbered five hundred families.

As an addition to a "resolution to call an English speaking colleague to assist Dominie Gebhard," there

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went on record one sentence, which stands boldly forth for the unalterable attachment of the older element in the congregation to the customs of their youth, and the tongue of the home-land. "The Dutch call shall remain unaltered, integer, as it now stands."

With this change the more active labors of the church devolved on Mr. Sluyter, but preaching every fourth Sunday, and often the second also, visiting the Dutch-speaking members, baptizing the children, marrying the young people, visiting the sick, and occasionally administering the Sacrament, went on with the senior pastor as before, while the more strenuous labors of the pastorate, its new endeavors, the work of the outlying districts especially of a revival nature, fell to the charge of the younger minister.

Life had begun to pour some of its fruits into Dominie Gebhard's hands. His eldest son, General Jacob Gebhard, one of the first attorneys of Schoharie County, had served several terms as Senator of his State. Also following his father's example, he with nine other men interested in educational advancement, formed themselves into a body corporate for the establishment of Schoharie Academy.

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Honorable John Gebhard, a younger son, was the first Surrogate of Schoharie County, and later was elected a member of the Seventeenth Congress from the same section. This Congress has been perpetuated in a unique and wholly personal fashion, the portraits of the entire Congress having been painted by Professor Samuel F. B. Morse, later of telegraph fame. Both General Gebhard and his brother John, were men of large political influence, an unusual feature of their public life being their leadership of two opposite political parties. To the Schoharie branch of the Gebhard family our State owes its first geological survey, as well as the earliest classification of its native flora.

Two younger sons, Dr. Lewis Gebhard and Dr. John Gabriel Gebhard were at this time practicing medicine in Philadelphia and Troy.

Sorrow had visited the absent members of the family, and the parsonage was once more full of children. In the year following the death of the Dominie's young son Charles, his elder son Philip, a prominent lawyer of Catskill, had died, leaving a wife and three young children. Charlotte, for many years the Dominie's only daughter, was also a widow with three

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children, and their grandfather and grandmother opened the doors of the old parsonage to the widow and the orphan. For a time the parsonage once more rang with childish voices, and the grandmother made ole-koeks, and rocked the grandchildren in the twilight, singing the old Dutch songs again to the little ones as she had sung them to her own children, while in the long hours of sunlight she taught the girls to spin, and weave, and bleach linen, to sew in finest stitches, and to make the rich preserves, and candied and dried fruits, for which the Dutch were famous.

One of these grandchildren, William H. Davis, in his old age, remembered weeding the beans in the parsonage garden in his childhood, and passing up bricks to the masons who were building the vestibules and new steeple to the old church. Another of these boyish recollections paints a picture peculiar to its day and generation.

Monday was the minister's rest day, then as now. Whether it was the Dutch Dominie's blue day in the usual significance, it was surely so in a peculiar sense. By this time there were ministers settled in many of the outlying districts, which had been only preaching

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stations in the early days. Many of these men were of Dutch or German extraction, with the music-loving, pipe-smoking tastes and customs of their race. On Monday morning the roads to the Claverack parsonage saw different ministers' gigs, or at times only a Dominie on horseback, drawing toward one center. When they had all gathered in Dominie Gebhard's living room, and the air was blue with smoke, they turned the occasion into a musical symposium as well, as they took their turns at the little German piano, playing favorite tunes or long remembered melodies of the home-land. It is not quite our modern idea of a minister's club, but if theology were given a second place in these Monday morning ministerial assemblies, at least they were a homeopathic remedy for a minister's blue Monday.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE FIRST ROBERT LIVINGSTON'S CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN.

An account of a voyage taken in 1769 by the proprietor of a wide tract of land called Smith's patent, in the middle of New York State, gives some interesting facts concerning the Manors and the Manor life along the upper Hudson, from an observer's standpoint. It says:

"May 8th.—We went on shore to Two Stone Farm Houses on Beekman Manor in the County of Dutchess, the Men were absent and the Women and children could speak no other Language than Low Dutch, our Skipper was interpreter. One of these Tenants for Life, or a very long Term, or for lives (uncertain which) pays twenty Bushels of Wheat in Kind for 97 acres of cleared Land, and liberty to get Wood for necessary Uses anywhere in the Manor—12 eggs sold here for six pence, Butter 14 d per pound and 2 shad cost 6d. One Woman was very Neat, and the Iron hoops of her pails scowered bright, the Houses are mean. We saw one Piece of good meadow

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which is scarce hereaway, the wheat was very much thrown out, the Aspect of the Farms rough and hilly like all the rest and the Soil a stiff Clay. One Woman had Twelve good countenanced Boys and Girls all clad in Homespun both Linen and Woolen, here was a Two-wheeled Plow drawn by 3 horses abreast, a Scythe with a short, crooked Handle and a Kind of Hook both used to cut down Grain, for the Sickle is not much known in Albany County or in this part of Dutchess."

"9th.—We arose in the Morn'g opposite a large Brick House on the East Side belonging to Mr. Livingston Father to Robert R. Livingston, the Judge in the Lower Manor of Livingston. Albany County now on either Hand, and sloping Hills here and there covered with Grain like all the rest we had seen, much thrown out by the Frost of last Winter. Landing on the West Shore we found a number of People fishing with a Sein, they caught plenty of Shad and Herring, and use Canoes altogether, having long, neat and strong Ropes made by the People themselves of Elm Bark. Here we saw the first Indian, a Mohican named Hans, clad in no other Garment than a shattered Blanket, he lives near the Kaatskill and had a Skunk Skin for his Tobacco Pouch, the Tavern of this Place is most wretched—Trees are cut in Leaf, Cattle and Sheep, nothing different from ours, are now feeding on the Grass which is nearly as forward as with us when we left Burlington, the Trees quite as forward, and the White Pine is common. One Shad taken with the rest had a Lamprey eel about 7 inches

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long fastened to his Back. I was informed here by a Person concerned in measuring it, that the Distance from KaatsKill Landing to Schoharie is 32 1-2 miles reckoned to Capt. Eckerson's, a good Wagon Road and Produce brot. down daily from thence to Cherry Valley half a Day's Journey, that People are now laying out a New Road from Sopus Kill to Schoharie which is supposed to be about 32 1-2 miles, Sopus Creek is about 11 Miles below KaatsKill Creek, and a Mile below where we now Landed, they say that 7 or 8 Sloops belong to Sopus—the Fish are the same in Hudson's River above the Salt Water as in the Delaware—the Skipper bought a Parcel of Fish here cheap, these Fishermen draw their Nets oftener than ours, not stopping between the Draughts. At three ocloc we passed by the German Camp, a small Village so called, having Two Churches, situated on the East Side of the River, upon a rising Ground which shows the Place to Advantage, some Distance further on the same Side of the River we sailed by the Upper Manor House of Livingston, a quantity of low cripple Land may be seen on the opposite Side, and this reaches 4 Miles to the Kaats Kill called 36 Miles from Albany; off the Mouth of this Creek we have a view of the large House built by John Dyer the Person who made the Road from hence to Schoharie at the Expense of 400 Lbs. if common Report may be credited—Two Sloops belong to KaatsKill, a little beyond the Mouth whereof lies the large Island of Vastic—there is a House on the North Side of the Creek and another with several Saw Mills on the South Side but no Town

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as we expected. Sloops go no further than Dyer about a Half a Mile up the Creek, the Lands on both sides of Kaats Kill belong to Van Berger, Van Vecthe, Salisbury, DuBois and a man in York, their lands, as our Skipper says Extend up the Creek 12 Miles to Barber the English Gentleman his Settlement, the Creek runs through the Kaats Kill Mounts said hereabouts to be a Distance of 12 or 14 Miles from the North River, but there are Falls above which obstruct the Navigation (these particular enquiries were made because this was supposed to be the nearest Port to our newly purchased Territory). We landed in the Evening on the KaatsKill Shore 4 Miles above the Creek, but could gain no satisfactory Intelligence, only that the Dutchess of Gordon and her Husband Col. Staats Long Morris were just gone from Dyer's House for Cherry Valley and Susquehanna with Two Wagons, they went by the way of Freehold by the Foot of the Mountains on this Side, and so over them to Schoharie, guessed to be about 32 1-2 Miles as was said before."

"10th.—We passed by Sunday Islands where of Scutters Island affords a good low Bottom fit for Meadow and some of it is improved, Bear's Island said to be the beginning of the Manor of Rensselaerwic which extends on both Sides of the River, the Lords of the Manors are called by the common People Patroons, Bearen Island or Bear's Island just mentioned is reputed to be twelve Miles below Albany—Cojemans Houses with Two Grist Mills and Two Saw Mills stand a little above on the West

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Side and opposite is an Island of about Two Acres covered with young Button Wood Trees which Island, our Skipper says, has arisen there to his Knowledge within 16 years and since he has navigated the River—more low bottom Land is discovered as we pass up, generally covered with Trees, being cleared might be made good Meadow by Banking or Improvement to which the Inhabitants are altogether Strangers, the upper End of Scotie's Island is a fine cleared Bottom not in Grass but partly in Wheat and partly in Tilth, however there was one rich Meadow improved, we saw the first Batteaux a few Miles below Albany, Canoes being the common Craft. One Staats House is prettily fixed on a rising Ground in a low Island, the City of Albany being 3 Miles aHead we discovered for the first Time, a Spot of Meadow Ground Plowed and Sowed with Peas in the Broad Cast Way, the Uplands are now covered with Pitch Pine and are sandy and barren as the Desarts of New Jersey, as we approach the town the Houses multiply on each Shore and we observe a Person in the Act of Sowing Peas upon a fruitful Meadow on an Island to the right. The Hudson near Albany seems to be about a Half Mile over. Henry Cuyler's Brick House on the East Side about a Mile below the Town looks well, and we descry the King's Stables a long wooden Building on the left, and on the same side Philip Schuyler's Grand House with whom at present resides Colonel Bradstreet (since Deceased and Schuyler is now a Major Gen. in the service of the United States) Col. John Van Rensselaer has a good House on the East Side.

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At Half after 10 oCloc we arrived at Albany estimated to be 164 Miles by Water from N. York and by land 157. * * * Stephen Van Rensselaer, the Patroon, or Lord of the Manor of Rensselaerwick his House stands a little above the Town, he is a young Man (since deceased)."

The foregoing journal gives some idea of the life of the tenants of the Manors of the upper Hudson a few years prior to the Revolutionary War. Every decade after that brought changes not only on the farms, but the life of the Manors themselves changed with each succeeding generation. When Robert Livingston bought the first tracts of his Manor land, the price paid to the Indians was in "guilders, Blankets and Child's Blankets, large shoes and small, large and small stockings, guns, powder, staves of lead, caps, tin kettles, axes, adzes, two pounds of paint, twenty little scissors, twenty little looking glasses, one hundred fish hooks, one hundred pipes, nails, tobacco, knives, rum, and beer, and four stroud coats, and two duffel coats."

Upon the payment of this price the lands were to be "delivered free and unburdened to Robert Livingston," save only "that the previous Indian owners should

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have the right of fishing in the Kill and hunting deer, provided they brought the head to the new owner." There was a marginal note added to this document by Tamaranachquae an Indian woman, who stipulated before signing the contract, that she should have the privilege "to plant for four years a little hook of land."

This first grant, ¹⁶⁸³~~1685~~, was for two thousand acres on Hudson's River, and on both sides of Roeliff Jansen Kill. In 1685 there was another purchase of land, and both tracts were erected into a Manor, with the right to "One Court Leet and one Court Baron, to hold and to keep at such time and times, and so often yearly as Robert Livingston or his heirs should see meet." Eventually Robert Livingston's grants of land reached "sixteen miles long and twenty-four broad" for which he paid the Crown a yearly rent of "eight and twenty shillings, Currant money of this country."

The boundary lines of the Manor were drawn by distances from the spot where "the Indians have laid several heaps of stones together by an ancient custom used among them," along "kills" and "mountain sides" and "runs of water" to other stones, and on to "five lime trees marked by Saint Andrew's Cross." On the

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old maps of Livingston Manor a certain point is marked "Manor Rock" which is presumably one of these old piles of stones which the Indians had thrown one upon the other. The earlier maps of 1714 also contain a print of the group of five lime trees, marking one corner of the estate.

In 1721 through the influence of the first Lord of the Manor, a church was built, to which an "able and pious Dutch Reformed Protestant minister from Holland" was to be called, and in his will executed the following year, he willed a number of acres of land for a parsonage glebe, and still further acres for a sustaining fund for the church. Although Robert Livingston had been instrumental in erecting a church, it seems to have been largely for the benefit of the tenants of the estate for the first fifty years, except in case of death, when the members of the Livingston family were brought home to be laid in the vault beneath the Manor Church. The Revolutionary War effected a change in this respect. This patriotic family being driven from the cities, the Manor Church, as well as the homes at Livingston, took on greater importance, and the church books began to bear record that many

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Livingston babies were baptized here, and older members of the family were married in the Manor Houses, while the noted Dr. Livingston who had been compelled to flee from New York took charge of the Manor Church during eighteen months of these troublous times. The old Manor Church and the first Manor House were only a mile and a half apart, the church being at Staatje, (little village).

In this same old record book, whose entries begin in 1723, there is a page written by John H. Livingston in finest script, under date of 1781, the language employed being Low Dutch. An entry is also to be found here of the baptism of "Johannes, son of Hendrick Van Rensselaer and Elizabeth Van Brug, Oct. 20th, 1744," which took place in the Manor Church at a time when the Claverack church was without a pastor, this Hendrick being a younger son of Hendrick Van Rensselaer the first Proprietor of the Lower Manor of Rensselaerwick, and among the early settlers of Claverack.

The first Manor House was very different from those which followed. The walls, as in all well built houses of that period, were built for protection, and were so thick that the windows looked like mere in-

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dentations. It was low ceiled and heavy raftered, and an old story connected with it, affirms that the first Lord Robert Livingston kept his money on the floor of his bedroom. It was literally his "pile," and a place of untold wealth in the eyes of the children and servants who passed his door, and looking in caught fleeting glimpses of heaps of Spanish coins upon the floor. In later years an occasional rusty coin has been unearthed near the site of the old Manor House, which has been thought to be one of these first rolling Spanish doubloons. This primitive bank had no Board or bank officials connected with it, and its President, and day and night guard, was the Lord of the Manor himself, whose strong personality seems to have been its only safety and defense.

The second Lord of the Manor, Philip the eldest son of Robert, did not live permanently at Linlithgo, but came and went as the business of the estate called him. However there are records of parties of children and grandchildren, and occasional friends in need of country air, coming to the Manor for long stays during the summer months, or a bride and groom spending a honeymoon there. One of these happy honeymoons spent

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at Livingston Manor was that of Sarah Livingston, Philip Livingston's daughter, who chose her country home even in windy March for a wedding trip, on her marriage to William Alexander. There was no hint of spring in the air at this time of year, but like a host of later dwellers along the banks of the Hudson, they probably saw that yearly marvel, the ice moving down the Hudson to the sea.

The marriage of "Sally Livingston" seems to have been pleasing to her family. On the birth of a daughter a year later, a humorous letter from Robert, her eldest brother, to his brother-in-law, says:

"I congratulate you on the increase in your family, and hope in the future my sister will beget a more masculine kind, and not spoil the family with such Lilliputians as your daughter."

Upon the death of Philip, the Manor again had a resident proprietor in the person of this same Robert, Philip's eldest son, who married Mary Tong.

Sons and grandsons had built Manor Houses on slightly locations in every direction before the year 1800, but during the war, and for several decades afterward, Robert Livingston, the third Lord, lived in the



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Third and last Lord of Livingston Manor.

After a Portrait owned by Richard Montgomery Callendar Livingston.

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old Manor House while at Livingston, for nearly all the family had winter homes in New York or Albany, as well as on the Livingston Manor.

Governor William Livingston of "Liberty Hall" New Jersey, wrote his brother Robert from Trenton in December of 1781 in reference to the visit of one of his daughters to the Manor.

"Dear Brother: I hear that your very numerous family is going to be increased by one of mine. I fear Susan will be troublesome to a house so overrun with company as yours. But my poor girls are so terrified by the frequent incursions of the refugees into Elizabethtown, that it is a kind of cruelty to insist on their keeping at home, especially as their mother chooses rather to submit to her present solitary life, than to expose them to such disagreeable apprehensions. But she herself will keep her ground to save the place from being ruined, and I must quit it to save my body from the Provost in New York, so that we are all scattered about the country. But by the blessing of God, and the instrumentality of General Washington and Robert Morris, I hope we shall drive the devils to old England before next June."

This letter tells the story of a house full of guests at the low-browed old Manor House at Linlithgo, and not a summer party, but at a time when the roads were white with snow, and the river was a pathway of ice.

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We may imagine that there were merry sleighride parties, and that the slaves who lived in the outhouses near the Manor House kept the fires roaring in the great fire-places, and warming-pans ready for the Manor beds, in the effort to keep out the one unwelcome guest, Jack Frost; that the apples and cider stored away in the cellars beneath the house, were greatly enjoyed by the guests, and that Susan Livingston did not regret that the troubles of war sent her to her uncle's for a genuine Manor Christmas.

To a friend Governor Livingston speaks again of his daughter, when it was the gayeties of city life which were giving her pleasure:

"My principal Secretary of State, which is one of my daughters, is gone to New York to shake her heels at the balls and assemblies of a metropolis, which might as well be more studious of paying its taxes than of instituting expensive diversions. * * My secretary is as celebrated for writing a good hand as her father is notorious for scribbling a bad one.

I am, &c.,

"WILLIAM LIVINGSTON."

This same William Livingston, the patriotic Governor of New Jersey, had much mechanical talent, and was fond of entertaining his leisure hours with tools.

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He said to his daughter one day, "Come with me, my dear, and see how many houses I own, and how rich I am in real estate." She followed him, to find in his study and workshop a large number of wren houses, which he had made with great enjoyment, and afterward put up on his piazza, and in trees all over his place. He was also very fond of children, and delighted in the visits of his sons and daughters and their children. A letter written to his son-in-law Mr. Ridley evinces this pleasure to a marked degree.

"Suppose, in reality, that you, and——and Mr. and Mrs. Jay, and —— should come to Liberty Hall next cherry time; why then, with my romping with some upon the piazza, and shooting robins with others out of the mazzard trees, and talking and romping with the elder boys and girls, and their fathers and mothers around the table, I protest, as some ladies say, that I would not exchange such a scene of happiness for any gratification of the Grand Seigneur."

William Livingston's daughters were as welcome guests at their uncle Robert's at Livingston Manor, as the Schuyler girls were at the Lower Van Rensselaer Manor. In the maps of 1798, previously referred to, the old Manor House waves a flag or pennant from its highest gables, and in the imaginations of the Liv-

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ington girls of Liberty Hall, a flag always waved from this happy country home. In the spring time the breath of the trailing-arbutus, blossoming under the leaves in the woods, and in the fall the spicy odor of the Chancellor's rare fruits, drew them toward the Livingston country.

During the war, Liberty Hall was open to much hostile attention from the British, but the patriotism of their father only bred greater loyalty to the Colonies in the hearts of his children. In a letter written by one of the Governor's daughters to a friend in 1777, we gain a glimpse of the state of things which sent Susan on a visit to the Manor at a later date:

"K.— has been to Elizabethtown, found our house in a ruinous situation. General Dickenson had stationed a Captain with his artillery company in it, and after that it was kept for a bullock's guard. K— waited on the General, and he ordered the troops removed the next day, but then the mischief was done. Everything is carried off that mama had collected for her accommodation, so that it is impossible for her to go down to have the grapes and other things secured, the very hinges, locks and panes of glass are taken away."

A couple of years later her father wrote to his daughter Catherine visiting in Philadelphia:

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"I know there are a number of flirts in Philadelphia equally famed for their want of modesty, as want of patriotism, who will triumph in our over-complaisance to the Red Coat prisoners lately arrived in that metropolis. I hope none of my connections will imitate them, either in the dress of their heads, or the still more Tory feelings of their hearts."

"I am your affectionate father,

"WILLIAM LIVINGSTON."

In her eighteenth year Sarah Livingston married Hon. John Jay, and to the same daughter as in the previous letter, a few months later Governor Livingston wrote concerning them:

"I am obliged to Mr. Morris for his promise of giving me the earliest intelligence of their arrival in France. I hope his business with the four quarters of the globe will not efface it from his memory. I have already suffered more anxiety on their account than I should have imagined I could be affected by on any account. The tenderness of a parent's heart can never be known till it is tried."

Miss Susan Livingston, who was her father's secretary, proved her kinship to her patriotic parent, when she saved his papers from the British on one of their raids. Governor Livingston, being warned, had left home at an early hour to escape capture by the Red Coats, entrusting his valuable papers to Susan's

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keeping. She placed the papers in a carriage box, and took them to a room in the upper story, then climbed out of a window to watch the approach of the soldiers. An officer, seeing her there, warned her to go within, for she was in danger of being taken for a man and fired upon. She turned to obey, but found it impossible to return by the window, through which she had found so easy egress.

Seeing her plight, the young officer entered the house, and sprang up the stairs, lifting her in through the window. With this vantage, she asked his name, and upon its being given as "Lord Cathcart" with a sudden inspiration she appealed to him for protection for a box of her own personal possessions, offering to open her father's library to the soldiers. Her request was complied with, and the box was guarded, while her father's library was ransacked, with no results detrimental to the patriot cause.

Mrs. Ellet gives a spicy letter from Kitty Livingston to her sister, Mrs. John Jay, in which many of the members of the Manor families of the upper Hudson, are mentioned.

THE FIRST ROBERT LIVINGSTON.

"May 23rd, 1780."

"Lady Mary and Mrs. Watts have rented Mrs. Montgomery's farm for two years; cousin Nancy Brown is one of their family. Colonel Lewis has purchased a house in Albany; one of the girls lives there with Gitty. He and Robert have each presented Cousin Livingston with a granddaughter. The Chancellor's is a remarkably fine child. Mrs. Livingston never looked so well as she did the last winter, and was so much admired in Philadelphia. She and Mrs. Morris are inseparable; she was also a first favorite of Mr. Morris. His esteem I think very flattering. Robert is in Congress, and I believe is at present there; she is to accompany him in the fall. General and Mrs. Schuyler are at Morristown. The General is one of the three that compose a Committee from Congress. They expect to be with the army all summer. Mrs. Schuyler returns to Albany when the campaign opens. Apropos: Betsey Schuyler is engaged to our friend Colonel Hamilton. She has been at Morristown, at Dr. Cochrane's since last February. Morristown continues to be lively."

It was this same Kitty Livingston who married Matthew Ridley of Baltimore, and who sent the following order to Nantes. In a return letter from John Jay dated Madrid, Jan. 21st, 1782, he hopes that at least one of the parcels may reach its destination:

"Be pleased to send for Miss Kitty W. Livingston, to the care of Hon. R. Morris, Esq., at Philadelphia,

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by the first three good vessels bound there, the three following parcels, viz.

"No. 1 to contain 2 white embroidered patterns for shoes; 4 pair of silk stockings; a pattern for a Negligee of light colored silk, with a set of ribbons suitable to it; 6 pairs of kid gloves: 6 yards of cat-gut and capuirc in proportion; 6 yards of white silk gauze."

"No. 2 to contain the same as above, except the silk for the Negligee must not be pink colored, but of any color that Mrs. Johnson may think fashionable and pretty. The shoes and ribbons may be adapted to it."

"No. 3 to contain the same as above, except that the silk for the Negligee must be of a different color from the other two, and the shoes and ribbons of a proper color to be worn with it."

Perhaps the most interesting of the incidents connected with the patriotic Kitty Livingston's career, was the letter General Washington sent her, from Valley Forge.

"General Washington having been informed lately of the honor done him by Miss Kitty Livingston in wishing for a lock of his hair, takes the liberty of inclosing one, accompanied by his most respectful compliments."

These girls, among the other cousins, continued to come and go at the Livingston Manor, and in time their children came also. The journey on the sloop up river was of itself a great pleasure. The sloops oft-

THE FIRST ROBERT LIVINGSTON.

en sailed in little fleets, with possibly friends and acquaintances on the neighboring white-winged vessels. Sailing through the beautiful Highlands by day, and anchoring at night under some craggy shelter where the whip-poor-will, or some splashing fish, made eerie noises in the shadows, and the sky above their heads swept in a great dark circle spangled with countless stars, was an experience to look forward to with joy.

All along the wharves of the upper Hudson were waiting relatives. The Chancellor's, Madam Livingston's, and John Livingston's houses were all near the river, and on the days when sloops were expected, there were sure to be some members of the Manor families awaiting merchandise, and others with an eager welcome for the expected guests.

On the Manor road which ran further inland, lived the "Widow Livingston," Henry W. Livingston, and General Harry Livingston in his bachelor hall, while at the crossing of the Manor-road and the postroad was the home of Walter Tryon Livingston, youngest son of Peter R. Livingston. This house at the cross-roads held one son and six daughters who added a large share to the life and interest of the Livingston

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country. Surely Livingston Manor was a place of which one might dream, and toward which the traveler would turn joyful and willing feet.

Out of the happy visits to the Manor in the early days, we have the printed record of a romantic outcome. Mrs. Lamb writes:

"The newspapers in November, 1796, chronicle a marriage and reception at the Governor's mansion, as follows: 'Married on the 3rd, at his Excellency's John Jay, Governor, Government House, John Livingston of Livingston Manor, to Mrs. Catherine Ridley, daughter of the late Governor William Livingston.' The bride was Mrs. Jay's accomplished and piquant sister, Kitty Livingston, who in 1787 became the wife of Matthew Ridley of Baltimore, and after a brief wedded happiness was left a widow."

CHAPTER XXVII.

MANOR JUNKETINGS.

John Livingston, a son of Robert, had built his house at Oak Hill in 1798. The walls, like those of the old Manor were very thick, and built of brick made on the estate, the woodwork also was constructed from trees hewn from the Manor forests. The old Lord's wide acres provided for all the needs of a household from the foundations to the roof. Within were deep window-seats, and stairs with old fashioned comfortable landings, and high mantels decorated with the beautiful putty-work figures of the past.

There were variations in the building of the various Manor Houses, but in each were the furnishings of the colonial period, Chippendale chairs, high-post, elaborately festooned bedsteads, pier glasses, and inlaid tables, beautiful little sewing tables which held the embroidery of the lady of the Manor in

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its tiny drawers, and many times some rare toy for the pleasure of the child who hung about its mother's knees, as she traced the fine stitches in her needle work. Embroidering chair-seats was a favorite occupation of the Manor ladies and their guests. One of these pieces of needle-work made by a daughter of Chancellor Livingston is still preserved. There were treasures in silver and china also, much of the silver being inherited from the first Lord Robert, and marked with the family crest.

There is a pen portrait of John Livingston written by one of his descendants, which almost brings the genial and courtly proprietor of Oak Hill into our presence, after the passing of over a century. "His style of dress was that worn by all the courtly gentlemen of the olden time,—a black dress coat with knee breeches fastened over his black silk stockings with silver buckles; similar buckles of a larger size were in his shoes. He had a high forehead, beautiful blue eyes, a straight nose and very determined mouth. His hair was carefully dressed every morning, the long queue was rewound, the whole head plentifully besprinkled with powder, and the small curls that had remained

MANOR JUNKETINGS.

in papers during breakfast time, adjusted on each side of his neck."

The Livingstons were still buying land and building saw-mills and flour-mills, and managing iron works as in earlier days of the Manor, only the purchases were made now in distant parts of the State, and in western lands.

There were dinner parties in those days where one great house entertained the guests of another; even-
ing gatherings of neighbors dropping in unexpectedly on moonlight nights, "water-picnics" in summer, and sleighride and skating parties in winter, with laughter and frolic. When the river was a glare of new ice after three zero nights, the venturesome spirits among the young people might stray down to its banks and embark on some swift-flying ice boat, skimming over the surface of the black ice before the wind, hearing the resounding noises of cracks in the new ice, avoiding air holes where groups of wild birds quenched their thirst in a circle about the open water, sweeping on with a thrill of excitement and pleasure over the wide expanse of the frozen river, while the cold winds blew down from the north, and the sky hung a half circle

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of steely blue over their heads, and the sun in the west sent comforting rays of warmth through their chilled bodies.

Less exciting, but still having the form of novelty, were the river sleigh-rides, when the fallen snow had turned the Hudson into a great white thoroughfare, and a sleigh-ride party, on a starry night drove up or down the river to their destination, wrapped in warm robes with soap-stones at their feet, and a tingle of joy in the air, yet glad to reach the door thrown wide open into the night, flooding the snow with a cheerful light, where warmth and welcome awaited them. Often they danced till the small hours in the long drawing-rooms, where the chill in the distant corners sent the dancers back to the nearer circles about the crackling log-fires in the great fire places. At Oak Hill alone there were nine sons and daughters, and the many groups of cousins of the different Manor Houses with their guests, made a merry company of almost any neighborhood gathering.

All the Livingstons were ship-owners, and the sloops at the docks were a perpetual temptation on the blos-

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soming days of spring, or in the balmy summer time, or during the glorious autumn days.

"Our two voyages" (to New York and back) "occupied nine days and seven hours," wrote one of the voyagers, "and we were received at Oak Hill with as hearty a welcome as if we had performed the journey around the world."

The Manor servants were still negro slaves, and the slaves on John Livingston's estate lived in the basement of the great house. They had a happy and an easy time, if we may trust a humorous sketch in a newspaper of later date:

"At Oak Hill, John Livingston resided, and owned a whole flock of negroes, the fattest, and the laziest, and the sauciest set of darkies that ever lay in the sunshine. They worked little and ate much, and whenever there was a horse-race or a pig-shave at the 'Stauchy' ((Staatje), the negroes must have the horses, even if the master should be obliged to go about his business on foot. When they visited Cats-kill in tasseled boots and ruffled shirts, they were sure to create a sensation, and it was not unusual for the 'poor whites' to sigh for the sumptuous happiness of John Livingston's slaves."

Washington Irving gives a graphic account of a visit to one of the Livingston Manor Houses in a let-

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ter written in the early part of 1812 to his friend Henry Brevoort:

"From the Captain's I proceeded to the country seat of John R. Livingston where I remained for a week, in complete fairy-land. His seat is spacious and elegant, with fine grounds around it, and the neighborhood is very gay and hospitable. I dined twice at the Chancellor's, and once at old Mrs. Montgomery's. Our own household was numerous and charming. In addition to the ladies of the family, there were Miss McEvers and Miss Haywood. Had you but seen me, happy rogue, up to my ears in 'an ocean of peacock feathers,' or rather 'like a strawberry smothered in cream!' The mode of living at the Manor is exactly after my own heart."

"You have every variety of rural amusement within your reach, and are left to yourself to occupy your time as you please. We made several charming excursions, and you may suppose how delightful they were, through such beautiful scenery, with such fine women to accompany you. They surpassed even our Sunday morning rambles among the groves on the banks of the Hudson, when you and the divine H—— were so tender and sentimental, and you displayed your horsemanship so gallantly by leaping over a three-barred gate."

The "Widow Mary" or "Lady Mary Livingston," both of which titles belonged to her, was a marked personality in the Manor life of the early years of the



CLERMONT OR THE "LOWER MANOR"

Built in 1730, and burned by the British during the Revolution. Rebuilt by
by the State under the direction of "Brave Margaret Beekman,"
the widow of Judge Robert R. Livingston.

Present Residence of John Henry Livingston.



CHANCELLOR LIVINGSTON'S HOME

This house was built by Chancellor Livingston after the Revolution.

Owned by Mrs. John Henry Livingston.

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nineteenth century. She had been a Miss Allen of Allentown when she married Henry W. Livingston, whom she survived forty-five years. Like Margaret Beekman of Revolutionary fame, and Catherine Schuyler, she built a mansion upon a commanding eminence, whose substantial elegance, has withstood the march of time, and whose beauty has never been excelled in any of the Manor Houses.

The "Widow Mary" Livingston was a woman of strong character who conducted her vast estate, brought up her family, built houses for her sons, and entertained widely and hospitably, as did all the Livingston wives before her. An old lady of Claverack who made her an afternoon call as a child, never forgot the grandeur of the great hall, the dignified "Lady Mary," with her high Swiss cap, which she was in the habit of carrying from place to place in a basket when traveling, the dark-faced butler in swallow-tails, with his mammoth silver tray, which he lowered hospitably before the child and her father, offering them cake and wine at his mistress' command.

The "Widow Mary" loved a garden, and from some

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far-away place imported the snap-dragon of our fields to-day. In neighborly kindness she presented a portion of her yellow-blossoming plant to the wife of Colonel Henry I. Van Rensselaer at the Stone Mills, and the hardy little flower showing wild instincts when planted in a box-bordered flower-bed, wandered all over the Livingston and Van Rensselaer Manors, and crept through all the Manor fences into the farm-yards and fields, till the "Widow Mary's" golden blossom is one of the best known wild flowers of Columbia County to-day.

It was this same neighbor, Colonel Henry I. Van Rensselaer, who aspired to have the first buggy in this part of the country, so placed his wood in the mill-pond to season for a year, at the end of which time the buggy was constructed, and presumably had the same durable qualities as the "wonderful one-horse shay" of New England fame.

Four Henry W. Livingstons have descended in a straight line from the first Henry W. Livingston, the husband of "Lady Mary." At the death of one of them in the long ago, a whole ox was roasted to entertain the great gathering of people who attended the funer-

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al. These were also the days when the minister and pall-bearers attended funerals clad in long pleated scarfs of white linen, fastened with black rosettes, and wearing black gloves.

To the first fifty years of the Republic belonged Robert, the last Lord of Livingston Manor; his brother, Peter Van Brugh, a merchant of New York, and active in the Provincial Congress; John, also a merchant of New York; Philip, the "Signer;" Henry; William, Governor of New Jersey, and father of Brockholst Livingston, Judge of the State Supreme Court, and Assistant Justice of the United States Court; Sarah, wife of Major-General Alexander, Earl of Stirling; Alida (Mrs. Martin Hoffman); Catherine (Mrs. John I. Lawrence).

Of the children of the last Lord Robert who belong to this same period, was Peter R. Livingston, who was President of the Convention of the State of New York in 1776; Chairman of the New York Committee of Safety; Colonel of the 10th Regiment from Albany County in 1775, but was detained from leading his men to the field by his duties to the State at that time, his younger brother, Henry, leading the Regi-

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ment as Lieutenant-Colonel. Peter R. began to build before the war, what he had intended to be his grand Manor House. The Revolution doing away with the entail brought his hopes to an end, and the house, with its solid foundation was never finished, simply a roof being placed over the first story. It has ever since gone under the name of the "Hermitage." At a later date Peter R. Livingston held the office of Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Columbia County.

Walter Livingston, the second son of the last Lord of the Manor, was a member of the Provincial Congress, and first custodian of the United States Treasury. His home was at "Teviotdale," which later came to be called "Fulton House," after the marriage of Walter's daughter Harriet to Robert Fulton, and their residence in this beautiful country home during many of the summers of their early married life. Robert C. was a merchant of New York and Jamaica, "C." standing for Cambridge University, where he was educated, and to distinguish him from the many other Roberts. John, for whom Johnstown was named,

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and who built Oak Hill, and General Harry, of Revolutionary fame, completed the sons, to whom were added Maria, who married Judge James Duane; Alida, the wife of Valentine Gardner, and Mrs. John Patterson.

The life of Livingston Manor a century ago belongs to the picturesque past, when great political service and large land and mercantile enterprises were combined with a home life, whose junketings and visitings, "water-picnics" and sloop journeys, and coaching parties, ended around the festal board of some Lord of the Manor, whose hospitality was as far-famed as were the beauty and grace of the Lady of the Manor, and the hearty welcome of his sons and daughters.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CHANCELLOR LIVINGSTON.

While Claverack's nearest neighbor, the town of Hudson, was progressing so rapidly, the quiet Dutch village and country-side were not forgetting their older neighbors and friends in Livingston and Clermont.

Chancellor Livingston's residence held a prominent place among the important homes of the upper Hudson. He had married a daughter of that John Stevens who owned the most of the site of Hoboken, and who was also a sister of the second John Stevens, the builder of the first ocean-going steamer. Her charming presence in the home added to the luster and renown of its hospitalities.

Each step of the Chancellor's advance had been watched with interest, from his selection as the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, to the appointment of Chancellor of the State of New York, and when the State

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Convention met at the old Van Kleeck house at Poughkeepsie to consider the Constitution, with the Chancellor, Philip Livingston, Hamilton, Jay, and Philip Schuyler among its warmest advocates, no section of the State was more alive to its outcome, than that along Chancellor Livingston's own stretch of the river, on the east side of the Hudson.

During the six weeks in which the debates continued, the subject was equally, if not as learnedly discussed through the country-side, and at last, when it was known that New York had unconditionally ratified the Constitution, the friends of its advocates, both personal and political, in Claverack, Livingston and Clermont, were jubilant, and the publication in the newspapers of the Constitution of the United States in full, found most earnest and interested readers in the men of the upper Hudson.

At the Lower Manor of Claverack, there was a double reason for rejoicing. Part of the Constitution had been drafted by Alexander Hamilton in one of the rooms of General Schuyler's house at Albany. As in other cases, it was a family as well as a State affair,

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and on the evening of the announcement of the ratification, the Schuyler mansion was brilliantly illuminated in celebration of the great Federal victory.

In 1801 Chancellor Livingston was appointed, by President Jefferson, as ambassador to the Court of France during the First Napoleon's reign, and his negotiations for the purchase of Louisiana, the successful conclusion of which doubled the extent of the country, giving the United States the whole valley of the Mississippi, the Rocky Mountains, the great plains, and a large stretch of the Pacific slopes, could not but excite intense interest in his fellow countrymen.

He returned from his stay in France to enter heartily, with Robert Fulton, into the plans for the first steamboat, proving himself an ideal friend, as well as an able coadjutor in the great project. In the absence of public encouragement in their venture, Fulton and Livingston found in each other a mutual inspiration, which carried them on a wave of courage and hope toward their great final achievement.

Though prominent in so many events of national importance, the Chancellor's interest in country life,

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its possibilities and improvements, gave his estate at Clermont a warm place in his regard, and his opinions in agricultural matters a value with the farmers of the section. He was keenly alive to all of nature's blessings, delighted in producing rare varieties of fruit, and was instrumental in introducing the race of Merino sheep into the United States. He himself owned at one time a flock of one thousand sheep of this breed, and a neighbor of his, Beriah Pease, who kept a flock on the "Fonda Hill Farm," gave the name, "Mount Merino," to the slightly elevation at the south of the city of Hudson.

His own home at Clermont was eloquent of the Chancellor's love of nature and the charms of a country life. The spacious mansion which he built a little south of the one which was burned during the war of the Revolution, had a river front of over one hundred feet and was almost as deep, built in the form of the letter H. In one of its wings the Chancellor is said to have had a fine library of over four thousand volumes, and the house itself was furnished with beautiful tapestry and furniture specially imported from France by its own-

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er. The silver service was also among the most magnificent of its time. Outside of the house were wide-sweeping lawns on three sides, skirted by the virgin forests, and the beguiling water-view of the Hudson river and Catskill mountains.

There were long planted avenues of favorite trees, favorable to a study of the Chancellor's views on the subject of tree-culture, and offering his guests enticing walks in the early dew-crowned morning, and the hours of sunset, or the witching hours of moonlight. These vistas of tree-planted avenues could tell stories of lengthy discussions of a political nature, between statesmen who found at the Chancellor's home a place of relaxation from the strain of the jarring world, or of younger people who met there at house parties, and found the dignity and charm of their surroundings conducive to the play of fancy, and the growth of sentiment. This house of history and story, with its past association, was still standing at the time of the Hudson-Fulton Celebration, but was burned the month following.

So courtly were the Chancellor's manners, so up-

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right his integrity, so full of honor the acts of his public and private life, it is not strange that his presence at Clermont was most highly esteemed. A student of men and of books, a man keenly interested in scientific pursuits, his life was a broad one, carrying through all its manifold activities a strong faith in God, as the guide and director of the lives of men.

Under Chancellor Livingston's name and the date of birth in the family Bible, one reads the prayer, "The Lord bless and be with him. Amen."

His friendships were strong, one of the closest being that with John Jay, who was his law partner for a short time in his early life. The correspondence of the two great men is among the gems of literature.

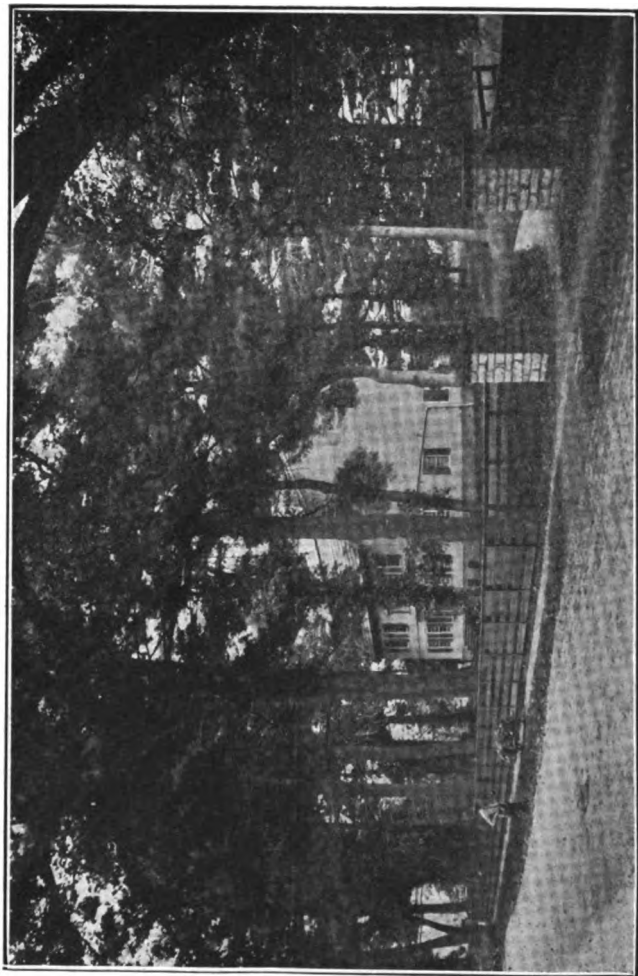
The Chancellor often ended his letters to his friends with "God bless you," as his ultimate wish for their well-being. When he died in 1813 the grief along the Clover-reach of the Hudson held a peculiar quality, in which respect and proprietorship, pride and affection, were equally mingled.

CHAPTER XXIX.

EARLY RESIDENTS OF CLAVERACK.

The perpetual leases given by the Van Rensselaers of the Lower Manor were considered equivalent to a sale, and brought to Claverack a class of men whose distinction gave the town a reputation beyond that of the settlements of the neighboring Manors, and whose family residences compared favorably with the Manor Houses.

William Henry Ludlow came to Claverack from New York some years before the War, and opened a grain store. As the raising and selling of crops was the business of farms for miles around, and Claverack was the place of exchange between the country and the "Landing," this business was of great importance. All traces of this first grain depot have passed away, but the fine colonial mansion which Mr. Ludlow built in 1786 still stands, and hanging upon its walls are the portraits of many of the early settlers of Claverack,



THE LUDLOW MANSION
Built by William Henry Ludlow in 1786.
Residence of Robert Fulton Ludlow.

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and the branch of the Livingston family with which they intermarried, for back and forth between these two great estates came the sons and grandsons of the Lords of the Manors, seeking wives among the daughters of those who had bought farms, and built homes in this section of the country.

The first owner of the Ludlow mansion and his wife with their high-bred faces, the merchant of that day in ruffled shirt and with lace dropping over his hands, look across the room into the faces of Robert Morris, the son of Chief Justice Richard Morris of "Bob Hill" fame, a prominent man of his day, and his wife, a sweet old lady in dotted-net cap, with kerchief and lace shawl below, and the tapering fingers of her time. The two families intermarried after the War, and later again with the family of Robert Fulton, whose portrait by Benjamin West holds an honored place among the rest; and all these pictures of the Claverack families of the past show gentle blood and courtly bearing.

Most of these earlier families built a second house, which is the one which stands to-day. This was the case with the Millers who descended from Cornelius Stephense Muldor who bought his thousand acres

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from the first proprietor of the Lower Manor. This family sent its branches into as many important positions in life as its acres were broad. The old Race homestead in Claverack occupies a portion of the old Miller estate. Here Court Martials were held during the Revolution. Cornelius S. Miller was a member of the Vigilance Committee, appointed to arrest Tories who were often confined in the cellar of his house, as were also delinquents of the Claverack regiment under the command of Colonel Robert Van Rensselaer. Killian Miller was Member of Congress and County Clerk, Stephen was a Presidential Elector and Member of Assembly, Hon. John I. Miller was Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in 1808 and Senator in 1821-22. They held military commissions, and were prominent in political life, both at that time and in later years. "On one occasion according to the late Joseph D. Monell, after a sharp political contest in which Cornelius S. Miller was successful, the young men of the town attached ropes to his gig and drew him home in triumph, Mr. Monell participating."

This branch of the Miller family continued to use Dutch in its family intercourse long after English was

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in common use, which would lead us to infer that they were among those lovers of the tongue of the homeland, who stipulated that the "Dutch call should remain unaltered, integer, as it stood," when an English colleague was called to assist Dominie Gebhard.

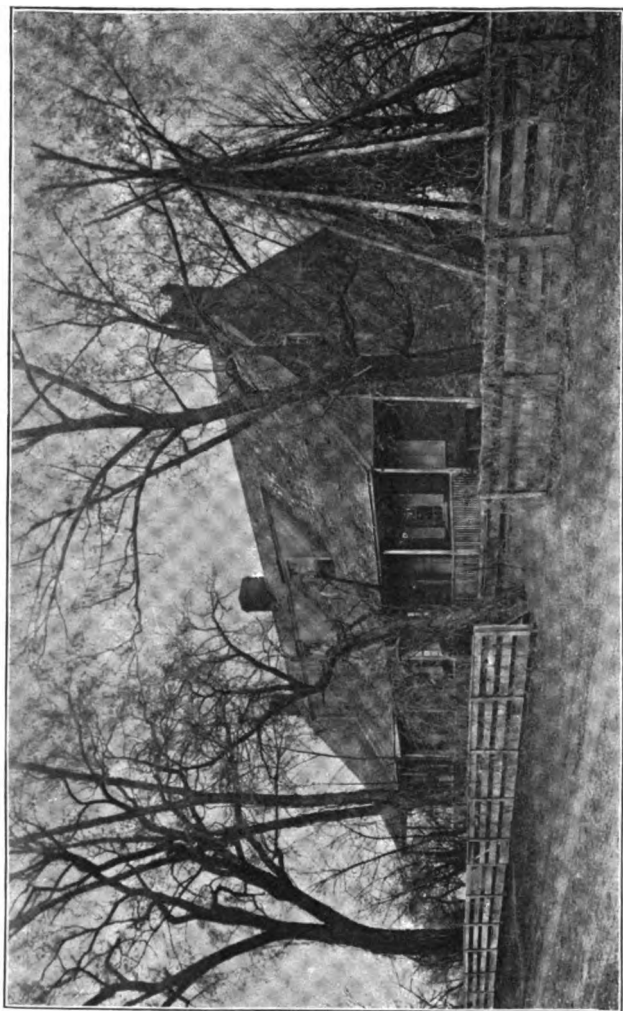
Stephen Miller of this family, carried on a store of similar importance to that of Mr. Ludlow from 1790-1834 known as the "old store" which was said to have been "a central point of trade and barter, where the farmers for miles around gathered to obtain their supplies." Previous to the time of railroads, transportation was carried on by wagons and sloops, and the country roads were never quiet or untraveled even in unpleasant weather. A store-keeper of Hudson, who was interested in this traveling wagon-trade, tells in his journal written in 1816 of a ride to Austerlitz, a distance of twenty miles, on which trip he counted seventy-two farmers going, and seventy-six returning. A country-store on the road to the "Landing" held an important place in those days.

Killian Hogeboom emigrated from Holland, bringing an infant son Jeremiah with him, soon after Hendrick Van Rensselaer came into possession of the Low-

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er Manor. His son Johannes was born in Claverack, and was the father of eleven children. There seems to have been room for any number of children to grow and prosper on the Claverack farms, some of the Claverack families numbering among their relatives one hundred own cousins. Cornelius Hogeboom, one of Columbia County's first Sheriffs, who was killed by the Anti-renters in 1791 was a son of Johannes. Judge John C. Hogeboom his grandson, was said by his contemporaries in political life to have been "one of nature's great men," who, while rendering marked political service to his State, won the respect and admiration of both friends and opponents.

Jeremiah Hogeboom was prominent in public life, as was also Stephen, his son, who was often Member of the Assembly and of the Constitutional Convention in 1801, also serving as State Senator. One of his daughters married General Samuel B. Webb who came to Claverack to reside after the Revolutionary War. General Webb had a most distinguished military career. "Hearing of the battle of Lexington he went to Boston in command of a company of light infantry, was engaged and wounded at Bunker Hill,



JAMES WATSON WEBB BIRTHPLACE
Where "The Night Before Christmas" was written.

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was subsequently aide to Gen. Putnam, and private secretary and aide-de-camp to General Washington. He was engaged in the battle of Long Island, wounded at White Plains and again at Trenton, and was in action at Brandywine. In 1777 he raised the third Connecticut regiment, which was captured by the British fleet. Colonel Webb was not exchanged till 1780, when he took command of the light infantry, with the brevet rank of Brigadier-General." Soon after he made Claverack his place of residence, he made an important journey to New York. This was at the time of the Inauguration of George Washington as President of the United States, upon which occasion he held the Bible upon which the President took the oath of office.

General Webb lived in one of the houses built by the Hogebooms after an ancient Dutch model, about the year 1760. Here in 1802 the General's son James Watson Webb was born, and until the house was burned in 1890 it was considered one of Claverack's most interesting landmarks. While holding important historical prominence, it possessed at a later day an interest forever connecting it with the glad Christ-

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mas season, for it was in one of its old fashioned rooms, that a descendant of the Hogebooms wrote that time-honored Christmas rhyme, "The Night Before Christmas." The picture painted of the silent house, the broad chimney accommodated to the descent of St. Nicholas, and the sleeping children, all took place beneath its Dutch roof, and the prancing horses bringing "St. Nick" and his Christmas toys, were supposed to have been galloping over the gambrel roofs of Claverack. A ride with children at a later date always embraced the road past the Webb house and its Christmas story.

The Esselstyns came from Holland in 1659, and Marten Cornelise Ysselsteyn was one of the fourteen original proprietors of Schenectady, but the charms of Claverack drew him away from his original purchase, and in 1668 he sold his farm for three hundred and thirty beaver skins, and ultimately settled in Claverack, where he leased a large tract of land, and to the seventh generation, Claverack still holds his descendants residing on the ancestral estate. We have no record as to whether the "beaver skins" paid for the new purchase, but the change of residence from

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Schenectady to Claverack does not seem ever to have been regretted. Military honors were plentiful in this family. Richard E. was a Captain and a Major in the Continental army, while his son Jacob, following in his father's footsteps, went forth at fifteen to fight for his country, and was a Major in the war of 1812. "The Esselstyns and Millers have at various times held nearly, if not all, the public offices in the county."

The Van Nesses, than whom no family stood higher in social and political life in the first fifty years of the Republic, have been already mentioned in the fruitage of eminent men who gave renown to Washington Seminary. This family was one of the earliest of those who built their homes along the Kolderberg (Post-hill); and who gave to that beautiful thoroughfare the name of being a very aristocratic section of Claverack.

The descendants of Samuel Ten Broeck, who married Maria Van Rensselaer, the eldest daughter of Hendrick, and who, with his wife, were the first to live in Hendrick Van Rensselaer's new Manor House, remained in Claverack to the third and fourth generation, owning a tract of land now divided into four

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farms. Samuel Ten Broeck was one of the committee appointed to erect the first church in 1726. Adam Ten Broeck served seven years in the War, and William Ten Broeck of this family was one of the "voorlesers" of the old Dutch Church.

Like Captain Conyn, Fitz Muzigh of Livingston was hung up in his own cellar by the Tories, and was most fortunately rescued by a neighbor. His son Hendrick acquired "a tenth lease" of one William Snyder of Claverack, with the consent of Colonel Johannes Van Rensselaer, agreeing to pay him "one-tenth of all the produce and four fat hens annually." Upon this farm he built a house in 1770. This house is still the property of his descendants, but the purchase in 1809 of the summer home of Hendrick Van Rensselaer, and their long residence there, has associated the Mesick name indelibly with this quaint old house, whose high ridge and sloping roof still remain, though the gambrel roof of the Van Rensselaer Manor days at the back has undergone change. This family have also held military commissions and filled civil offices, the first Lieutenant's commission being signed by Cadwallader Colden in 1764.

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The Tobias Van Deusen house was built in 1742 with gambrel roof, and its gable end to the road once bore the date 1742 in figures over a foot long. Tobias 1st married a Scotch lady of Linlithgo, and his son James, a daughter of Robert Hathaway, one of the early settlers of Hudson, who was a ship owner who sent "ventures" to the West Indies. This couple seem to have been among the pioneers of the Dutch residents of Claverack who entered into marriage with the New Englanders of Hudson.

Steadily in the early years after the "Proprietors" from Providence and Nantucket, bought land for a town from Peter Hogeboom and the Widow Hardick, one house after another was built by the Quakers on the turnpike road to Claverack. Equally as steadily Claverack poured her citizens into the new town of Hudson, till eventually there came to be the mixed Dutch and Quaker race which are residents of this section to-day.

Time would fail to tell of the Rossmans and Hoffmans, the Philips and Russells, the Delamaters and Le Roys, Leggetts and Schumakers and Flemings and many others who have wrought large deeds for the

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well-being of Claverack, and often for their native State as well. Are they not all written in the County and State records and in every history of Claverack?

It is the women of these families who raised households of children, who saw their sons occupy positions of honor generation after generation, and their daughters marry and repeat their mothers' lives, of whom it is difficult to find the records, yet these were a mighty factor in the life of Claverack. We read it best in the quaint household utensils that tell of their daily labors, in the work of their hands in quilts and spreads, woolen sheets and woven coverlids made by their industrious fingers, by the beautiful embroideries of dress and furniture, the samplers with their virtuous rhymes, and the more impressive picture samplers, whose subjects were wont to be of tomb-stones and weeping willows, and wooden-armed mourners, hiding wooden features through the handkerchiefs held before their eyes.

Occasionally there are favorite books to be found, very grave treatises on manners and personal piety, with a pressed leaf or flower between the leaves, or a

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worked card-board book-mark of as serious a design as the samplers.

There are tender family stories laid away as it were in lavender, by some lover of her ancestors; or some ludicrous incident of the long ago held fast in a humorous memory. Sometimes one hears of a merry group of girls, the village beauties, and how many proposals they each boasted, giving their descendants the impression that proposals of marriage were as common and constant as the gentleman's attentions to his lady, and that the chosen wife at last, had she known, must have felt like the end belle of a long line.

After all this,—from which we picture the woman of the past,—there are still occasional portraits so charming and characteristic, that one may read between the lines, and see the haughty dame whose head was carried high, the gentle matron whose heart is shown in her face, the sunshiny eyes and humorous curves to the lips in another frame, the serene faces of the women who were mothers at sixteen, the sad and the glad,—and we gain a fresh insight into the personalities of our fore-mothers.

Thus we come to know the women of yesterday,

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who are in no records, yet who graced the homes of Claverack and of other colonial towns, who visited each other, rejoicing and weeping with their friends in turn, who filled their days with earnest labors, who walked the village streets, and were driven over the roads, and tripped across lots as their descendants do to-day, pleased with the first wild flowers, tending their gardens, planting tiny trees that now shade us from the heat of the summer sun, watching the glistening icicles that hung to the pine-needles, and the snow drifts that blocked the road and hid the fences, owning and loving the world they lived in, and their husbands and children in that time of long ago.

Through this Claverack world of men and women and children, Dominie Gebhard walked for fifty years, social and vivacious, but always dignified and courteous, his personal amiability making him a peacemaker in the congregation, and as a pastor a most welcome visitor, carrying with him to his outskirting churches a genial fellowship as well as a clerical blessing. Dr. Currie says of him, "He was a learned and a good man, and in the fullest sense of the term a gentleman. He was distinguished for his sagacity, his knowledge

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of human nature, his prudence, and his self-control." One of the descendants of these families of the past has written of him, "For nearly half a century Dominie Gebhard filled a large place, albeit a man of small statue, in the religious, social, and educational life of Claverack. His memory is a shrine at which even the descendants of those who lived under his ministry never cease to worship."

CHAPTER XXX.

MONTGOMERY, LAFAYETTE, AND THE ERIE CANAL.

A dramatic event took place on the Hudson during the summer of 1818. For forty years the body of the brave General Montgomery had lain in Canadian soil. Janet Livingston Montgomery had only been allowed three years of happy married life with her soldier husband. Her years of bereavement had been many. When the request was made for her, to the Governor-in-Chief of Canada, Sir John Sherbrooke, that General Montgomery's remains be removed to New York, it was courteously granted.

An act had been passed in a recent session of the Legislature of New York, recommending that a commission be sent to Quebec on this important errand, and Governor DeWitt Clinton appointed Lewis Livingston, a son of Edward Livingston, to receive the remains and direct the formalities incident to the re-

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moval. .On July Fourth a military escort under the Adjutant-General and Colonel Van Rensselaer accompanied the body from Whitehall to Albany where there were impressive ceremonies. After resting in state in the Capitol over Sunday, the body was taken down river in the steamboat Richmond, the following day. The greatest respect was paid the passing boat by the citizens of the towns along the river, in many places minute guns breaking the silence. There were old soldiers and officers of the Revolutionary war still living, and many a tear-dimmed eye and lifted hat, watched the silent movements of this unique funeral bier, which brought the brave General back to his own after nearly half a century.

The Governor had acquainted Mrs Montgomery of the hour in which the Richmond would pass Montgomery Place. Alone she waited on the verandah in front of her house as the hour approached. Since the good-bye spoken at General Schuyler's house at Saratoga, she had lived half a lifetime, always cherishing the memory of "her soldier," made doubly precious through the early tragic parting. As the wheels ceased to move, and the boat stopped in front of Mont-

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gomery Place, over the water came the muffled music of the "Dead March," played by the band on board. A salute was fired and the Richmond proceeded on its way, leaving behind the grey-haired woman who had given her all for her country, and could still say, as she had written from Ireland some years earlier, where she was visiting General Montgomery's family, "When I return home I hope to find my dear country for which I have bled, the envy of her enemies and the glory of her patriots." The events of this July day were the crown of her great sacrifice and grief of years, and the glory of a country whose army had held such a soldier as General Montgomery.

General Montgomery's monument in front of St. Paul's chapel, New York, bears this inscription—

"This monument is erected by order of Congress, January 25th, 1776, to transmit to posterity a grateful remembrance of the patriotism, conduct, enterprise, and perseverance of General Richard Montgomery, who, after a series of successes in the midst of the most discouraging difficulties, fell in the attack on Quebec, 31st December, 1775."

After the removal of General Montgomery's body

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the following inscription was added—

“The State of New York caused the remains of Major-General Montgomery to be conveyed from Quebec and deposited beneath this monument the 8th of July, 1818.”

The War of the Revolution was still leaving its aftermath in many ways, and it was not all sorrowful.

Hudson is said to have been one of the first cities in the Union, which sent a committee of invitation to Lafayette in New York, on his last visit to America, offering the hospitalities of the town.

In September 1824, he embarked on the steamer *James Kent*, commanded by Captain Samuel Wiswall, the “Commodore,” to make a tour of the Hudson, stopping along the way to meet old friends and to accept invitations which had been tendered him. He spent a morning with General Morgan Lewis and his wife, Gertrude Livingston, at Staatsburg, and after leaving their hospitable home, asked for his old friend Colonel Harry Livingston. A little later the steamer stopped at Kingston Point, and Colonel Livingston, who had crossed the river in a row boat, came aboard. Lafayette’s joy at the meeting was un-

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mistakable. The two old friends rushed into each other's arms, giving one another a hearty kiss in true French fashion, to the surprise of the Americans aboard. Their close association in army experiences had made a tie of warm comradeship between them, not easily forgotten through the intervening years.

Chancellor Livingston's two daughters lived at this time in the Livingston homes at Clermont. The eldest had married Edward P. Livingston, a grandson of the Signer of the Declaration of Independence. He had been private secretary to Chancellor Livingston during the latter portion of his ministry to France, and at this time lived in the older of the two Manor Houses, the one rebuilt by Margaret Beekman, widow of Judge Robert R. Livingston, during the Revolution. In the Chancellor's home lived Robert L. Livingston who had married the younger daughter.

Upon the arrival of the James Kent at Clermont, with General Lafayette on board as the guest of honor, word was sent to the city of Hudson, when a "committee of citizens consisting of Rufus Reed Esq., Mayor Dr. John Tallman, and Colonel Strong, accompanied by two military companies, the Hudson Brass

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Band, General Jacob R. Van Rensselaer and suite, and Brig.-General James Flemming and suite, proceeded upon the steamboat Richmond, Captain William J. Wiswall, to meet Lafayette at Clermont, and escort him to Hudson."

The reception given Lafayette at Clermont was a most brilliant social event. The lawn of the Chancellor's old home was beautifully illuminated, and for half a mile crowded with guests, while the water in front was dotted white with vessels bringing guests from the towns in the vicinity. The cups, plates, ladies' gloves, and slippers, bore the likeness of Lafayette. It was a distinguished gathering, including among its numbers many of the most prominent citizens of the State.

Lafayette reached Hudson on the following day, and it is said, "met with a reception the most heartfelt and joyous ever bestowed on man." The procession through the streets was a notable one. As it stopped a moment before Mayor Tallman's residence (now the Graceland) his little boy, a very beautiful child, ran to the carriage to see Lafayette. The General was so pleased with the bright face of the little fellow, that he lifted him into the carriage with him, and the

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child reached the acme of boyish aspiration, as he rode through the streets of the town under the arches, and between the cheering lines of people, seated beside the visiting General.

The carriage in which Lafayette rode was drawn by four black horses, and attended by four grooms in livery. Following was a lengthy procession of military organizations and citizens of Hudson and Claverack, and other near-by places. The streets were crowded with people, all anxious to gain at least one look at the man America delighted to honor. The procession passed on its way through arches of evergreens, bearing inscriptions of welcome to America's friend, bowing cordially to the hosts which lined the thoroughfare on either side. At the head of the street surmounting one of the arches stood a colossal figure of the Goddess of Liberty, bearing the stars and stripes in her hand.

At the Court House Lafayette was received by the ladies of the town, and welcomed by the Mayor, to whom he responded in a brief speech. Here he met sixty-eight veterans of the Revolution and had a kindly word for each. It had been expected that he would

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dine in Hudson, but the beautiful and elaborate decorations of Allen's tavern, and the sumptuous feast provided, were a lost labor of love, since the delays of the journey made it necessary that the guest of the day should leave without partaking of the banquet. He did alight, however, at this point, and admire the efforts made in his behalf, which included a wreath suspended over the chair designed for him, and contained an appropriate poetical welcome. After partaking of some light refreshment, he bade the multitude farewell, and embarked for Albany.

The beautiful water-way of the Hudson was the medium of transmitting the great public events of the day in this quarter of the world. One other spectacle of momentous import occurred the following year. Governor Clinton's dream and ambition had been to cut a canal through New York State, and thus unite the Great Lakes and the Hudson. Clinton met with similar experiences to those of Robert Fulton in his great project, and his political antagonists called his design, "The Big Ditch," and ridiculed his scheme, hampering him at every step. However, during at least a part of the long waiting time, he had the en-

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couragement of Gouverneur Morris and Robert Fulton on his committee, able coadjutors and courageous friends.

After fifteen years of hard work, and many discouragements, on October 26th, 1825, the canal, which was four hundred and forty miles in length, was finished, and everything was in readiness to let the waters of Lake Erie into the channel. There being no telegraph, the news was carried to distant points by means of a chain of cannon placed all along the route, to give notice of the event. The first gun was fired at ten o'clock ; at eleven Albany rang out her salute of joy, and from then on all the way down the Hudson, the flashes told the story. It is easy to imagine the interest of the crowd on Round House Hill at Hudson that October morning, and the villagers and farmers of Claverack were said to have gathered in large numbers at the Landing. At eleven o'clock and twenty-one minutes, New York city heard the glad tidings.

Nor were the fire-flash messages all. Four canal boats, with the Seneca Chief in the lead, followed, having started from Buffalo with a distinguished company on board. The canal boats did not travel as

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quickly as the flashes, but their progress was triumphant. People gathered at every available place along the route to welcome the little fleet. Some of the citizens of that day thought the whole State had turned out to rejoice. There was a special celebration at Albany, where Ambrose Spencer, formerly of Claverack, was then Mayor. Sloops and steamboats saluted the whole length of the river, in which ovation the whistles and flags of the Hudson boats joined most heartily.

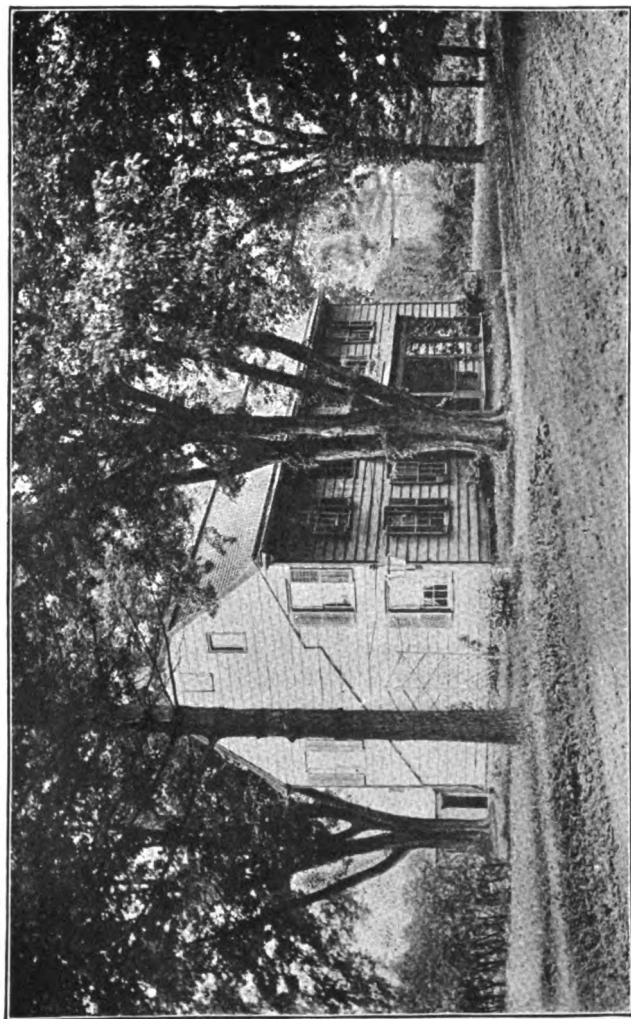
When the four canal boats reached New York, there were great processions on water and land. The boats moved down the bay beyond Sandy Hook amid greetings from the Forts, and here Governor Clinton lifted aloft a keg of Lake Erie water, and poured it into the ocean, thus mingling the two waters. The completion of the Erie Canal opened up a vast area in the central and western part of the State, paving the way to great cities, and increased commercial prosperity, almost past computation in its beneficial effects.

CHAPTER XXXI.

SHADOWS ACROSS THE SUNSHINE.

The later years in the Claverack parsonage held both tragedy and romance. Annamaria, the last of the Dominie's children, was little older than the grandchildren who had come to make the parsonage their home. The charm of her fair young womanhood appealed greatly to her nephews and nieces, and they seem to have looked upon her with wide-eyed admiration. Her engagement in her seventeenth year to John Bay, a rising young lawyer of the village, wove around her a romantic interest in the eyes of the younger members of the family.

When she started one fair spring day for Hudson, to buy her wedding dress, with the consciousness that her wealth for the purpose lay in a veritable gold piece safely stowed away until she had reached her destination, it is probable that the fancies of the young, which in the spring time "lightly turn to thoughts of love,"



THE BAY HOUSE

Built by John Bay, Esq., about 1780. One of the houses whose fireplaces were ornamented with Holland tiles portraying Scripture scenes.

Residence of Frank H. Webb.

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were hers in a large measure, and that they wove threads of gold through the dreams of flowered silks and silvery satins, which formed the goal toward which she traveled. Already she could see the salesmen in the shops of Hudson, gathering breadths of silk in their hands, as they threw out the folds of soft sheeny material, descanting on the relative beauty and merit, of trailing green vines or rose-bud figures, while Annamaria told herself that there never had been such a beauty before, as she would select for her wedding gown.

The birds sang love-songs among the blossoms, or built new nests in the tree tops, wind flowers along the roadside bent their delicate heads to the gentle breezes, and the slender green branches of the willows mirrored themselves in the clear waters of Claverack Creek. Everything in nature spoke of renewal in the spring of 1816, but no part of it all exceeded the joy that sang its own song in the young girl's heart as she drove to Hudson to buy her wedding dress.

Where or how it happened no one knows to-day, or who in the long after time, found a tiny gold mine in some clump of cow-slips, or just under the edge of

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some sheltering rock, or among the pebbles in the purling brook beside the road, but Annamaria lost her gold piece that fair spring day, and the wedding dress waiting for her, was never cut from the piece.

Her grief came down in the annals of the boy who helped build the church steeple, and the deep pity of his childish heart, led him to his grandfather to plead that his Aunt Annamaria be given another gold piece for the wedding dress. That gold pieces of considerable value were not plentiful in a country parsonage, where the fatherless and motherless were also being cared for, was not discernible to the child, only the sad look of the old man as he gently said, "Go away, child. Go away, child," remained in his memory.

Whether the mother's Philadelphia wedding dress of long ago, with its soft satin stripes, and hair lines of green on the corn-colored background, was substituted for the gown that was to have been chosen by the young bride herself, or whether the disappointment brought on a decline, history is silent, but before the next springtime had brought birds and flowers and apple blossoms, Annamaria had died of "a

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consumption," aged seventeen years and seven months.

In the days when the joys of earth were slipping away, she copied in her own hand and signed with her own initials, in the family Bible, that record book of vital events of the past, "The Bride's Farewell," a tender and touching good-bye to the loved members of her family. In the rhythmical measures, we are led to believe it was originally intended as a farewell to her girlhood's home from a bride about to leave it for the home of her husband, but it was at this time used as a last farewell. In such lines as—

"I in gems and roses gleaming,
On the eternal sunshine dreaming,
Scarce this sad farewell may speak."

the poetess, all unconsciously, had inserted lines of double meaning, fitting them to this unforeseen use.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE CROWN OF LIFE.

It is a significant fact that in 1799 in the zenith of his labors and influence, there had come to Dominie Gebhard the "Proclamation of the President of the United States, John Adams, calling for 'a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer,'" while in the closing months of his ministry, October 18th, 1825, Governor Clinton issued his first proclamation for the observance of a public thanksgiving. The fullness of days and of labors called for thankfulness both in church and State.

In April 1825, the original large parish over which Dominie Gebhard had presided, was reduced still further in size by the withdrawal of the Hillsdale church, to which Claverack agreed. A few days later the old Dominie passed in his resignation as the senior-pastor of the church, and the Dutch call which had

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"remained unaltered, integer, as it stood" for nearly fifty years became null and void.

The years were sapping the strength of the intrepid Dominie of the past, yet the letter to the Classis of Rensselaer asking to be relieved of his charge on account of advancing age and infirmities, rang also with a touch of the old undaunted spirit in its closing sentences which asked "that he might still be held a member of the Classis of Rensselaer, and be permitted to preach occasionally when invited, or administer the Holy Sacrament when his strength would permit" and was signed,

"Yours in the love of the Gospel,

"J. G. GEBHARD."

The last of the grandchildren to be born in the old parsonage, and to be baptized by the old Dominie in December, 1824, was Charles William Gebhard, M. D., the writer's father. Nine other children of the congregation received the rite of baptism at the old Dominie's hands the same year. In the year of his resignation he performed twenty marriages, and two in the last year of his life, for that the life of this godly man was drawing to a close, was becoming apparent

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to his old parishioners. Preeminently a minister of the Sacraments, it is fitting that the last word that we have of an act of his on earth, should have been the administering of the Holy Communion.

Dr. Currie, a child of the old church, writes, "I, who was kindly taken by the hand and encouraged by Mr. Gebhard when I resolved to devote myself to the work of the ministry, cannot forbear to revert to one scene in which that venerable servant of God was an actor, and which is vividly impressed on my mind.

"It was the Sabbath, and the church had come together to remember Christ in the 'ordinance of the Holy Supper.' Just before the elements were to be distributed, Mr. Gebhard came into the church, it is believed, for the last time. As he opened the door every eye was directed toward him. His gait was erect, but his countenance was wan. He took his seat in the front of the pulpit and at the right of the table. And as he sat there contemplating the scene before him, and doubtless anticipating with confidence and joy of heart the arrival of the moment, when he should be welcomed home to glory with the plaudit, 'Well done, good and faithful servant,' the peace with-

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in was shadowed forth in the heavenly serenity which was depicted on his brow. 'He ate of the bread, and drank of the wine in remembrance of Christ.' He arose in his place amid a profound silence, and delivered the last address which he ever made at the Communion table, or to the church to which he had ministered for more than half a century.

"He spoke in the Dutch language, with earnestness, yet with deliberation, and in a manner such as became him, standing on the borders of eternity. He seemed like one from the other world, who had just appeared to deliver a message from God and return. And when I looked on him standing forth as the 'ambassador of Christ,' and remembered how often he had said, 'I would rather wear out than rust out,' and saw the lamp of life then evidently flickering in the socket, I experienced sensations which for the time were overpowering, and cannot be described."

On August 16th, 1826, this faithful servant of God passed to his reward. The church books recording his demise, add this resolution, "Resolved that the present minister and consistory of this church wear the usual badge of mourning on the left arm for eight weeks,

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and that the pulpit be draped in mourning for six months."

In the childhood of the author and compiler of these records, she often heard elderly people speak of having heard Dominie Gebhard preach, or his having married or baptized them or their ancestors, as a matter of self-congratulation, an honor attained. Within the past year, two persons, one an old lady over ninety, another a granddaughter of a Quaker resident of Hudson, speaking for her grandmother, have made this same claim in the same manner, but with an explanatory sentence. "We heard old Dominie Gebhard preach in our girlhood. Of course we did not understand a word, but people went to hear him as they went to hear Beecher in later years." That, then, was the clew to this apparent attainment, but with a difference. Men went to hear Beecher that they might enjoy the brilliant thoughts of a mighty intellect. Men and women went to hear the Dutch Dominie of Claverack, that they might see and hear a man whose personality had dominated nearly a whole County, for over fifty years.

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The great work of his life may be read in the records of hundreds of family Bibles of Manors and farm houses, not only scattered through the old Claverack congregation and Columbia County, but carried to the large cities, and over the prairies to the far west, and into the sunny south, and with sailors across the sea. He pleaded for heavenly blessings in baptism over the heads of five thousand children save seventy-six, and solemnized nearly two thousand marriages. Besides this, hundreds were welcomed to the communion of the church.

Who can tell how far Dominie Gebhard's influence counted in the making of this nation, in heavenly blessings called down by this minister of the Sacraments, and also in the educational advantages brought with him from an older country, and showered generously on the infancy and youth of our new Republic! The closing note of such a life is a glad one, with its obituary written long ago:—

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.”

CHAPTER XXXIII.

IN BLOSSOM TIME.

"Thus it is our daughters leave us,
Those we love, and those who love us!
Just when they have learned to help us,
When we are old and lean upon them,
Comes a youth with flaunting feathers,
With his flute of reeds, a stranger,
Wanders, piping through the village,
Beckons to the fairest maiden,
And she follows where he leads her,
Leaving all things for the stranger."

Like a sunbeam slanting in at the half-closed door of the old parsonage, there appears one final scene connected with the old home, full of a romantic interest and youthful happiness. The Dominie's wife and daughter, and the grandchildren who composed the parsonage family, had moved into a house on the Kolderberg with one of the old Dominie's sons, Dr. John G. Gebhard, and his Philadelphia wife, while they awaited the building of a new home near by, and the



MRS. RICHARD C. MORSE AND TWO OF HER CHILDREN

After a painting by Samuel F. B. Morse.

Now owned by Gilbert Colgate, Esq.

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Rev. Richard Sluyter, the English minister, occupied the parsonage.

The following spring, Mr. Richard Morse, a son of Jedediah Morse of geography fame, was traveling through the country obtaining subscribers to the New York Observer, a religious weekly lately established in New York city. He bore letters of introduction to the clergy, and among them was one to the Rev. Richard Sluyter with whom he stayed over a Sabbath. Being a linguist himself and a book lover, he was attracted by a bookcase in Dominie Sluyter's parlor, containing volumes in many languages. It proved to be Dominie Gebhard's library which had not yet been removed from the parsonage. Upon enquiry, he was told that the old Dominie's wife held the key, and would be very willing that he should examine the books.

He lost no time in taking the walk over the Kolderberg. It was just at sunset, and the beauty of the magnificent view which swept off to the Catskills, over fields and woods and orchards, sunk deep into the New Englander's soul. The Old-Man-of-the-Mountain was sinking to sleep beneath a pink coverlid

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of clouds, and for a wide half circle the sky was ablaze with a mass of brilliant colors. Thoughts of sun-set and spring-time were woven through the young man's thoughts, as he approached his destination. He found his host, the son of the old Dominie, upon the porch, enjoying the rest and quietness of the close of the day, and seating his guest in this pleasant out-door gathering place, the two men entered into a conversation of marked interest to both. Long ago Jedediah Morse had written in his geography, that "the Dutch were an honest, industrious, and enterprising people," and his son was very willing to make their acquaintance.

The bright clouds faded while they talked, and the gathering twilight hung a mist about them full of the odor of the blossoming trees. Sweetly, out of the twilight there sounded a girl's voice. She was evidently somewhere within the house. What she said we do not know, or what vibrant quality thrilled through her words. Perhaps it was the inherited musical charm of the grandmother's singing, which touched an answering chord in the young man's heart. Perhaps the sunset and the blossoms had created a hush in his soul which waited for the voice of the maiden to fill

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it. From this time his host held only half his attention. With all his heart he was listening for the musical voice again, and when at last he left, with the promise of the key to the library on Monday morning, the books in many languages had become a secondary interest,—he was in love with a voice.

A little discreet questioning at the parsonage brought out the fact that the old Dominie's granddaughter, Louisa Davis, lived with her mother in her uncle's home on the Kolderberg, and the young man resolved to stay in Claverack till he had made her acquaintance.

Eagerly he looked forward to the hour of church service, and the opportunity to behold the maiden whose voice had charmed him, but disappointment was in store for him. All unconsciously she had stayed at home that spring day.

Her absence but fanned the rising flame in the visitor's heart. There is time for much quiet meditation and the formation of many plans and purposes through a long church service, and piety and love alternately swayed one worshiper that morning. Before the close of the service he had resolved to search

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the church records and discover whether the Dominie's granddaughter was a member of the church, his New England conscience refusing its consent to an affection unblessed by religious experience.

Here again he was doomed to disappointment, for the eighteen-year-old maiden was not yet a church member, but between the pages of the church records he found the entries of the many marriages performed by the old Dominie. It was a poor source from which to strengthen his resolution to forget the beautiful voice, if he could not prove its owner's piety. And so, disappointed once more, his heart only grew fonder, and on Monday morning, instead of fleeing from the enchanted spot back to his city home, or to breathe the air of his native New England, he took his way once more over the Kolderberg in the dewy morning, a path already rich with the thought of love.

At the end of his walk, a vision burst upon his sight, which made his heart start, and then stand still with awe. Etched against the masses of white and pink blossoming trees, with pools of blue sky between, stood a young girl holding in her hands a mass of filmy white material. The gentle breezes blew the

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white film, her dress, and hair in the summer sunshine. Her beautiful arms, dimpled at the elbows, waved in the air as she tried to throw the lacey goods out straight in front of her, before placing it on the hillside grass. Her motions as well as her voice were full of grace, her long swan-like throat, the escaping tendrils of her hair, the liquid depths of her blue eyes, and the pink of her wind-swept cheeks, making a picture a painter might long to capture, and before which a lover worshiped.

The young girl was sent with the key and the guest to the parsonage, and once more the Kolderberg seemed a road of light to the young man's feet. They looked over the books together, her sweet voice offering many happy comments as he handled the old volumes, and at length, thirsty with the walk and the morning's occupation, they strolled down to the old well in the garden. Perhaps the young man planned to stray beyond ear-shot of the parsonage family, for it was not only a cup of cool water he offered the maiden at the parsonage well, but his heart, and his hand, and his life. There is no chronicle of her an-

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swer, but we may reasonably suppose that she said it was "very sudden."

In the end she asked her lover to wait a year for his answer, which he consented to do, writing regularly, letters which breathed his passion on every sheet. As for the Dominie's granddaughter it would seem that she was somewhat of a coquette, for she never answered the letters, till at last being expostulated with by her mother, she acknowledged that she cared for her ardent suitor.

He is said to have sailed toward Claverack for his answer one year to a day from the time that was set. By some means the letter with the crown of his hopes reached him upon a steamboat on the Hudson, while he was traveling northward, and his joy knew no bounds.

In the fall of the same year they were married in the uncle's new home, and the maiden of the sweet voice rode over the Kolderberg, that pathway of beautiful sunsets and love, to the town of Hudson, where she set sail for New York, and a life in the wide world little dreamed of in the days before a stranger fell in love with her voice in the twilight.

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The couple whose union commenced in so romantic a manner, were blessed with five sons and five daughters, nine of whom grew to manhood and womanhood, and have been warmly interested in the educational and philanthropic movements of their own time. Two of these children, those pictured in the illustration at the opening of this chapter, became later the mothers of ten boys, six of whom bore the name of Colgate, and following in the path of the generation before them were graduates of Yale, the remaining four, with the name of Hodge, graduated at Princeton, all of them carrying into the Twentieth Century the loyalty to learning and education of the founder of Washington Seminary.

The mechanical and professional talents which Dominie Gebhard possessed in a rare degree, were inherited by the different branches of his family to the fourth and fifth generations, several of these later descendants being prominent in the expert-mechanical and professional world, while seven of the sons of the Nineteenth Century have followed in the footsteps of their revered ancestor, and become ministers of the Gospel.

The Manors with their Court Leet and Court

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Baron and their old world grandeur are gone. The tenants no longer pay rent in "scheppels" of wheat, but own their own farms. The old Dominie is gone to his reward, and the parsonage with its gambrel roof and its past associations is no more, but tales of them all still hang low over Clover-reach, like sunset clouds edged with gold and rose color, making it a land of legend and story, of a romantic interest and dream-like charm, equalled by few sections of our home-land.

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